

EIB, Jordan discuss cooperation

AMMAN (Petra) — Cooperation between Jordan and the European Investment Bank (EIB) was the main issue under discussion at a meeting held Wednesday at the Ministry of Planning in the presence of several ministers and a delegation headed by EIB Vice-President Arian Obolenski. Minister of Transport and Acting Minister of Planning Samir Qawar, who chaired the meeting, said the EIB delegation was visiting Jordan to evaluate Jordanian-EIB relations and future projects that will be established in the wake of the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty and those that can be financed by the bank. Mr. Qawar said the meeting reviewed investment projects carried out by the government, especially water and transport projects. He said the meeting also reviewed infrastructure projects for the tourism sector on the Aqaba and the Dead Sea beaches and regional energy projects involving Jordan, Egypt, Israel and the Palestine National Authority (PNA). He said the Ministry of Planning will conduct comprehensive studies on these projects to present them to the bank and to discuss them at the international economic summit which will be held in Amman in October.

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Peay III visits Special Forces

AMMAN (Petra) — The commander-in-chief of the U.S. Central Command, General J.H. Binford Peay III, Wednesday visited the Royal Special Forces Command and was received by His Royal Highness Prince Abdullah, the Regent, and senior officers. Gen. Peay III was briefed on the establishment and development of the Special Forces and then watched field drills by the forces' personnel. Royal Air Force helicopters participated in the exercises, which included shooting targets with live ammunition.

Whidat team to play in W. Bank

BETHLEHEM (Agencies) — Jordan's leading Premier League soccer team arrived in the West Bank on Wednesday for the first such visit in nearly three decades. The team from Whidat Club will play teams from the West Bank and Gaza Strip during the 10-day visit. Whidat is Jordan's 1994 soccer champions. Before the 30-strong club squad left Amman shortly before noon for the King Hussein Bridge, club Director Bahjat Shihab told the AP it will play five matches with Palestinian football teams in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and Gaza.

Europeans loan PNA \$300 million

GAZA CITY (AFP) — The European Investment Bank has granted the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) a \$300 million soft loan, officials said Wednesday. Palestinian Cooperation Minister Nabil Shaath sealed the deal with bank officials in Gaza City on Tuesday. He said it would be spent on industrial, agricultural and water projects.

Bomb injures 3 Israeli allies

SIDON (AP) — Guerrillas detonated a roadside bomb next to an Israeli-allied patrol in South Lebanon Wednesday, injuring three militiamen, security sources said. The bomb went off as a patrol of the South Lebanon Army (SLA) militia drove on the Saida road near the mountain town of Jezzein in an Israeli-held "security zone" in the south, said the sources. One militiaman was seriously injured and two others suffered light wounds, said the sources. The SLA-run Voice of the South radio station acknowledged the attack.

Iran says Iraq violates ceasefire

NICOSIA (R) — Iran has told the United Nations that Iraq violated the ceasefire that ended their eight-year war 13 times in the latter part of December, the official news agency IRNA said on Wednesday. Iran's representative to the U.N. reported the violations, which occurred between Dec. 21 and 31, in a letter to U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Ghali, the agency said. IRNA said the letter "listed cases of the ceasefire violations such as shooting towards Iranian territory, reconstruction of old trenches, building new strongholds, traffic in buffer zones, penetrating into the Iranian territory and patrolling of Iraqi helicopters over border areas."

'Iraqis wound Kuwaiti'

KUWAIT (R) — Three armed Iraqis entered Kuwait on Wednesday and shot and wounded a Kuwaiti then drove off in his car, the Kuwaiti Interior Ministry said. A ministry statement said the car was later recovered elsewhere in the demilitarized zone along the desert border. The ministry said the incident on a Kuwaiti farm in the Abadi area of the demilitarized zone would prompt Kuwaiti authorities to take further border security precautions.

Truck driver, 2 Israeli policemen killed in Gaza

GAZA STRIP (Agencies) — Israeli troops shot and killed a Palestinian driver in the Gaza Strip on Wednesday after his truck crashed into a border police jeep escorting Jewish settlers. Two Israeli policemen were killed in the collision.

The Israeli army said the Palestinian was shot because he was carrying a toy pistol and suggested he purposefully rammed the jeep. Palestinian police, however, disputed that account, and said the crash was an accident.

Israeli army sources initially said the Palestinian opened fire on the Israelis. But Col. Nabi, Israeli army commander for the southern Gaza Strip, said that account apparently came from another Israeli soldier who erroneously assumed that the shots he heard came from the Palestinian.

Col. Nabi said the truck crashed into a convoy of Israeli vehicles, killing two policemen and seriously wounding two others. The truck driver got out of the car and pointed a toy pistol at the convoy, he said. An Israeli soldier fired on the driver, killing him.

Asked whether he thought the crash was an accident,

Col. Nabi said: "In my opinion, there's no doubt that it was done on purpose."

A high-ranking Palestinian police official, however, said the collision took place after the truck either lost its brakes or got a flat tyre.

"The Israelis overreacted and killed the young man," said Brigadier-General Saeb Ajez.

Major General Salem Dardoneh, chief Palestinian liaison officer with the Israelis, said the Israelis were not allowing Palestinian officials to examine the truck.

The incident occurred near a junction outside the Jewish settlement of Netzarim in the Gaza Strip, which is ruled by the Palestinian autonomy government except for areas around settlements.

Israeli Police Minister Moshe Shahal, speaking in Israel's parliament, said:

"A Gaza local truck hit a border police jeep and two policemen... were killed. The truck driver came out with a gun. An army officer on the scene in a car ahead of the jeep shot him dead. There are two wounded policemen in hospital."

Mr. Shahal did not say how the two policemen were wounded.

Israel, PLO end Cairo talks; differences remain

CAIRO (Agencies) — Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) ended another round of talks on Wednesday, but failed to reach agreement on voting by Arabs in Jerusalem and the size of the Palestinian council that will run the self-rule territories.

The lack of apparent progress followed optimistic remarks Tuesday by chief PLO delegate Saeb Erekat, who said the months of negotiations had entered a new chapter.

"The issues we disagree on are substantive," Dr. Erekat said after the talks Wednesday. Israeli delegates refused to comment.

Israel and the PLO disagree on whether Arab residents in Jerusalem will be allowed to vote. The PLO wants the Arab, eastern part as a future capital, and voting by Arab residents could be seen as a first step towards a claim of sovereignty.

Israel, which seized the eastern part in 1967, claims the entire city as its capital and has promised not to "divide" it again.

Another dispute is the size of the council that will run the Gaza Strip and the West Bank town of Jericho. The PLO wants 100 members, but Israel views it more as a cabinet with 12 members.

"The positions remain as they were," Dr. Erekat said.

"The two sides meet again in the West Bank next week and then return to Cairo on April 10. Israel and the PLO have pledged to try to meet a July deadline for an agree-

ment on an Israeli withdrawal from West Bank towns to make way for the elections.

The withdrawal and the elections were called for in last May's Israel-PLO pact that established the self-rule zones. The accord also called for broadening autonomy to other areas of the West Bank, which would come under the elected council's authority.

"We're continuing work on the joint draft. I don't want to be positive or negative," Dr. Erekat said.

It was not known where the next round of talks would be held, but the meetings have been taking place in the autonomous Jericho enclave on the West Bank one week and in Cairo the next.

Israeli embassy spokesman Yaacov Setti told AFP earlier that there had been "progress" in the talks "and the two sides are going to try to seal the chapters on the make-up of the council."

Dr. Erekat said he had consulted Mahmoud Abbas, the chief PLO negotiator at the secret Oslo talks which led to the PLO-Israeli declaration of principles signed in September 1993.

"He said that the Israelis proposed in Oslo that the Palestinians of East Jerusalem can vote and be elected. That's why it's written 'participate.' If you open any dictionary you will find that participate means elect and being elected," Dr. Erekat said.

The negotiators have agreed that the chairman of the council will be directly elected by universal suffrage.



QUEEN BEATRIX IN JERUSALEM: Queen front of the golden Dome of the Rock on Beatrix of the Netherlands poses with Muslim Haram Al Sharif. Queen Beatrix toured the dignitaries on Wednesday in Jerusalem in Old City in East Jerusalem (AFP photo)

Israel and Syria project conflicting pictures of talks

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Israel and Syria are on the verge of a breakthrough in their peace negotiations for the first time since they began in 1991, Israeli officials said Wednesday.

Syria said however, it expected its Washington peace talks with Israel to remain deadlocked and blamed Israeli Premier Yitzhak Rabin.

"Indications coming from the Rabin government until now confirm the Israeli position is still as it was and that means the peace process will remain stalled," the official daily Al Baath said.

According to Israeli Fore-

ign Minister Shimon Peres, an agreement in principle covering security arrangements on the Golan Heights could be sealed this week.

"I hope that we will reach an agreement in principle this week," he told Israeli Radio as ambassadors from Syria and Israel pursued talks in Washington.

"If an agreement is struck, it will then be up to military chiefs in both countries to translate it into a reality on the ground," Mr. Peres said.

"If the discussions keep going, there is a strong chance that we will reach an agreement on Friday," added a foreign ministry spokes-

man, Yigal Palmor.

But Mr. Peres admitted that differences remained over the question of "symmetry" in security arrangements, which Israel opposes.

Damascus wants mirror images on both sides of the border of issues such as demilitarised zones.

"Syria is much bigger than Israel," Mr. Palmor said. "If they also get the Golan back they will have a basic strategic and topographic advantage."

"If you push the logic of symmetry to its limits, Syria would only need to demilita-

France opposes call for extra Libya sanctions

PARIS (Agencies) — France said Wednesday it opposed a U.S. call for economic and military sanctions against Libya to be tightened, notably by the imposition of an oil embargo.

"We can only say that we back continued over monitoring the... effectiveness of the current system of sanctions which must be comprehensively implemented and respected," said foreign ministry spokesman Richard Duque.

"This implementation does not call for any extra legal decisions by the U.N.," he said, ahead of a meeting of the U.N. Security Council in New York on Friday to discuss the Libyan sanctions issue, as it does every three months.

On Tuesday the United States pressed its allies for tougher sanctions against Tripoli aimed at bringing in Libyan suspects in the bombing of a U.S. airliner over Lockerbie, Scotland in December 1988.

The White House said "further action was warranted" against Libya after President Bill Clinton's national security advisor, Anthony Lake, met Monday with relatives of the crash victims.

But White House spokes-

man Mike McCurry said it was aware its allies would have reservations. "We're under no illusions that it's going to be easy," he said.

The crash of Pan Am 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland on Dec. 21, 1988 killed 270 people and Washington has demanded that two Libyans, Abdel Basset Ali Al Megrahi and Lamen Khalifa Fhimah, be handed over for trial.

Tripoli's representative to the United Nations said Libya has routinely been a target of diplomatic attacks such as the recent threat to impose an oil embargo.

"Every time the Security Council has to decide on the sanctions, families of the U.S. victims reinforce the pressure on their government," Mr. Azwai said Tuesday.

"Logically, we believe that the council will neither lift nor tighten the sanctions," said Mr. Azwai.

Arab League Secretary General Esmat Abdul Meguid denounced the U.S. move.

"The escalation will harm Libya, the region and various parties which are trying to find a peaceful issue to this problem," Dr. Abdul Meguid told AFP after talks in Cairo with Libyan Foreign

PKK evades Turkish forces

MERGASUR, Iraq (Agencies) — Turkish Kurd separatists are evading Turkish troops by hiding in caves and bushes during the day and moving at night through a canyon country in northern Iraq, villagers said Wednesday.

Two teenage boys said they stumbled on 50 Kurdish Labour Party (PKK) rebels in bushes in a region 200 kilometres east of Turkish-held Zakho and 15 kilometres south of the Turkish border.

"First I was frightened, but the men made us understand we shouldn't talk," according to the elder of the two who was 15 years old.

The group numbered 50 men and women who were armed with Kalashnikov rifles and who split into groups heading both east toward Iran and west in the direction of Zakho, the boy said.

He did not know what they planned to do. Turkish troops have concentrated most of their forces around

PNA starts issuing passports

CAIRO (Petra) — Arab League Secretary General Esmat Abdul Meguid Wednesday received the first copy of the Palestinian passport from Mohammad Subeih, executive secretary of the Palestinian National Council. Mr. Subeih, permanent delegate of the Palestine Liberation Organisation to the Arab League, said the passport was valid for all Arab countries and is written in Arabic and in French. In Amman, Minister of Interior Salameh Hamud said Jordan respects the Palestinian National Authority's decision to issue passports for the Palestinian citizens Mr. Hamud said Jordan considers the Palestinian passports as legal and will allow Palestinians to use these passports when crossing the Jordanian territories in their way to Saudi Arabia for pilgrimage. Around 5,300 Palestinians will be leaving for Haj this year, according to sources at the Ministry of Interior. The sources said these pilgrims will be the first to benefit from these passports. Ahmad Al Tamimi, director of the Palestinian Ministry of Interior, said the authority would begin issuing passports on Friday to Palestinian residents of the two self-rule areas, Gaza and Jericho.

King stresses U.S. role in Mideast peace, restates Jordan's stand

WASHINGTON (Agencies) — His Majesty King Hussein continued his talks with senior American leaders and politicians and stressed the importance of the American role in achieving a just, comprehensive and permanent peace in the Middle East.

During a meeting with Senate majority leader Robert Dole and minority leader Thomas Daschle on Tuesday, King Hussein expressed appreciation for the U.S. Congress' stand that supports debt relief for Jordan and said that security and stability in the Middle East necessitate the pooling of efforts to ensure a healthy development and positive change in the lives of the people.

The two senators reaffirmed their country's commitment to support the Arab-Israeli peace process and emphasised the U.S. backing for Jordan in all fields in view of the importance of Jordan's role in the region and its efforts to achieve permanent and comprehensive peace, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, reported.

The meeting was attended by Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker, Chief of the Royal Court Marwan Al Qasem, His Royal Highness Prince Talal, the King's military secretary, Her Royal Highness Princess Ghaida, Foreign Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti and Jordanian Ambassador to the U.S. Fayez Tarawneh.

The King and Her Majesty Queen Noor and the accompanying delegation later met with the president and members of the Foreign Affairs

Committee of the Senate and exchanged views on regional and international issues of mutual concern.

King Hussein stressed the commitment of the Arab parties to the peace process and to pursue a lasting, comprehensive and just peace based on international legitimacy.

Senator Jesse Helms, president of the Foreign Affairs Committee, said the Senate values Jordan's role in the peace process and expressed appreciation to the King's endeavours aimed at achieving comprehensive peace in the region.

The King and Queen also met with Representative Robert Livingston head of the House of Representatives Financial Committee, and Rep. Sonny Callahan, head of the Foreign Operations Committee of the Financial Committee.

The meeting was attended by Sharif Zeid and Mr. Qasem.

On Tuesday, Secretary of State Warren Christopher predicted that Congress would soon decide to write off all of Jordan's debt to the United States.

King Hussein also said he believed the issue would be resolved to Jordan's satisfaction.

"I think that matter is proceeding in orderly (fashion) and, I hope, to a successful outcome," Mr. Christopher told reporters. "I hope it'll be worked out in the very near future."

Mr. Christopher said members of Congress had been

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Kozyrev: Russia has new Mideast ideas

CAIRO (Agencies) — Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev said on Wednesday he discussed with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak new ideas to revive the faltering Mideast peace process.

Mr. Kozyrev has said his country, a joint sponsor with the United States of the peace process, believes U.S. efforts alone cannot ensure progress.

Asked if he discussed any new initiatives on the peace process, Mr. Kozyrev told a news conference:

"We have our own ideas and I put them to the president and to (Egyptian Foreign Minister) Amr Musa ... so I think I am well equipped to see other countries and give a push (to the peace process)."

"I feel like we're probably on the right track and our thinking is on the same wave length as the Egyptians," he said. "There is a smell of good ideas."

Russia has so far taken a back seat to the United States in international efforts to broker an Israel-Syrian peace treaty and speed up implementation of a Palestinian self-rule accord.

Mr. Kozyrev and Mr. Musa both declined to specify what Russia's new ideas might be. Mr. Kozyrev said he would put them to Syrian leaders when he goes to Damascus, the next stop of his Middle East tour that also includes Lebanon and Israel.

Mr. Kozyrev said he also discussed with Mr. Mubarak the nuclear Non-Proliferation

Treaty (NPT). The pact is due for extension next month but Egypt has refused to sign until Israel, widely believed to possess 200 nuclear warheads, signs up.

"We need them to move towards the international verification system," Mr. Musa said. "We are not after promises — things have to be very much to the point and linked to time frames."

Egypt also sought a wider regional commitment to establish a zone free of all weapons of mass destruction, Mr. Musa said.

"We cannot tolerate this situation of the Israeli nuclear programme outside the international system ... this is hurting national dignity and regional security," he said. Mr. Kozyrev said Russia

strongly supported a global and unlimited extension of the NPT.

"I have an optimistic feeling on our meetings today," he said. "I hope to have a frank and direct exchange on that matter with the Israeli authorities," he said.

Moscow has joined Washington in calling for an unconditional and indefinite extension, and Mr. Kozyrev said he was pleased by Arab support for the treaty.

The Arab League has called on Arab countries to back the NPT and its goals.

Mr. Musa said Egypt's "position has not changed and will not change unless the Israeli position changes and takes a concrete step forward."

(Continued on page 7)

Ekeus: Rebuilt Iraqi factories legitimate

KUWAIT (R) — Iraqi installations described by American officials as potential new arms factories are engaged in legitimate industrial activity or permitted military programmes, a senior U.N. official said on Tuesday.

Rolf Ekeus also said he felt, following recent American statements, he had to inform Gulf Arab states the U.N. Special Commission on Iraq he heads was still on the ball.

"I felt it was important to talk to high officials to clarify that we control the country, because some may say 'what is this commission doing — they (Iraq) are building rockets. Is the U.N. totally helpless? I point that they are not helpless,'" Mr. Ekeus told a news conference in Kuwait.

"I must say from our point of view we see no concern. It's quite legitimate to purify water and try to boost agriculture," added Mr. Ekeus, referring to a plant rebuilt at Faluja.

U.S. Secretary of Defence William Perry and U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. Madeleine Albright, in a campaign against lifting of sanctions on Iraq, cited Faluja, which Washington calls Habbaniyah, in recent talks with Gulf officials.

Iraq denounced Mr. Perry's statements as trying to frighten the Gulf states and drum up business for U.S. defence firms.

The plant produced chemical weapons before the 1991 Gulf war but Mr. Ekeus, who met Kuwaiti leaders on Tuesday, said it was now legitimate.

"We know very well they produce chlorine for water purification (at Faluja) which I think is highly legitimate, and they also try to produce pesticides and insecticides for

supporting agriculture," he said.

Mr. Ekeus said he had noted that the Americans had cited the new factories as purported evidence that the Iraqi elite was lavishing money on arms and prestige projects.

But he said in fact the pesticide and insecticide plants would help boost the country's food production.

Mr. Ekeus said he understood American officials had announced that the "former weapons factories" had been rebuilt, without emphasising that they were not now weapons factories.

The satellite pictures the Americans showed compared the facilities in their ruined state in the immediate post Gulf war period to their rebuilt condition at present.

"Now you see a nice smart building with a nice roof — it looks very threatening," Mr. Ekeus commented.

Iraq's weapons capability as well as its oil industry have been under tough U.N. restrictions since the 1991 Gulf war that ended its seven-month occupation of Kuwait.

Mr. Ekeus, who on Monday said there was still a problem with Iraq's biological weapons programmes, said under U.N. weapons resolutions, Iraq had the right to defend its own borders.

On rocket factories, Mr. Ekeus said Iraq was trying to produce missiles of 50 kilometres range and also trying "not very successfully" to make missiles of 100 kilometres range.

"They have the right to produce (those rockets). It is completely in line with the resolutions," Mr. Ekeus said.

Under U.N. Gulf crisis resolutions Iraq is forbidden to have missiles of over 150 kilometres range.

Turkey brings in respected politician as foreign minister

ANKARA (R) — Erdal Inonu, the respected social democrat named Turkey's foreign minister in the midst of a big military incursion into northern Iraq, may have been handed a tough job, but analysts and colleagues believe he can succeed.

"It is natural that foreign policy should go to Inonu who has a good grasp of foreign issues, good links abroad and heads the parliament foreign affairs committee," Ilmur Cevik in the Yeni Yuzil daily commented on Tuesday.

"When queries hang over the northern Iraqi operation and there is stiff Western pressure, Inonu will... bring to the government the philosophy, cool-headedness and sound sense of a wise man," analyst Yavuz Gokmen wrote in Hurriyet.

Turkey is pushing ahead with an eight-day military push into northern Iraq to wipe out separatist Kurdish bases that has generated international criticism and calls for rapid pullout.

Only a few hours after moving into his post following a cabinet reshuffle on Monday, Mr. Inonu was on the telephone to explain the operation to German counterpart Klaus Kinkel, a strong critic of the military campaign.

A 69-year-old Western-educated physics professor, Mr. Inonu was a relative latecomer to politics in 1983 but became a popular social democrat until he resigned from party leadership in

1993.

A tall, willowy man with a quiet sense of humour, he served as deputy president of the Stockholm-based Socialist International group when he was party leader at home.

His devotion to democratic principles and human rights will force Prime Minister Tansu Ciller to make good her pledges to democratise, analysts say.

Mr. Inonu must nurture a shaky customs deal with the European Union (EU) which the EU now links to a rapid military withdrawal from northern Iraq and concessions expected by the West in the perennial problem of divided Cyprus.

Many feel he has strong diplomatic skills, drilled into him by his father Ismet Inonu, a military and diplomatic hero who was Turkey's second president after the death of Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, the founder of the modern, secular republic.

Ismet Inonu, who fought occupying allied armies as a general, won his diplomatic spurs by successfully negotiating a tough peace treaty with Britain, France and Italy at Lausanne in 1923.

Deputy Prime Minister and Republican People's Party (CSP) leader Hikmet Cetin who offered the post to Mr. Inonu, his former party boss, said:

"I'm grateful to Inonu for accepting such a difficult post when Turkey is going through such a difficult time."



KURDS DEMONSTRATE: Kurds demonstrate in front of the Palais des Nations in Geneva against the ongoing Turkish offensive against Kurdish rebel bases in northern Iraq (AFP photo)

U.S. justifies Turkish move on rebels

WASHINGTON (AFP) — The United States, Tuesday firmly defended Turkey's right to send its army into northern Iraq to crack down on separatist rebels, but urged Ankara to finish the operation fast.

"The fact of the matter is that the PKK is there" in northern Iraq, said State Department spokeswoman Christine Shelly, referring to the separatist Kurdish Labour Party.

Ms. Shelly said that since attacks were being launched from northern Iraq into Turkey and Iraq was unable to quash such activity, Turkey had every right to do so.

"A country has the right to protect itself if a neighbouring country cannot stop rebel bases from operating in its territory," Ms. Shelly said, stressing that Turkey had promised to respect Iraqi territorial integrity.

"The PKK has killed hundreds inside Turkey," Ms. Shelly said.

On Monday, the United States, which had not previously criticised Turkey's incursion, for the first time voiced concern to Ankara over the operation and its effect on civilians.

The U.S. ambassador met with Turkish Prime Minister Tansu Ciller to express "concern about the reports that we have been receiving that Turkish forces might be preparing for a longer stay in northern Iraq," according to the State Department.

Ms. Shelly stressed Tuesday, however, that Iraq was failing to enforce a U.N. Security Council resolution banning dealings with any "terrorist" group, to which Baghdad has agreed.

She did not say how Iraq itself could be expected to control PKK activities in a region over which Baghdad has no effective control.

How Iraq might come into compliance with that council resolution, she added, was up to Baghdad.

The United States, France, and Turkey, in Operation Provide Comfort, are moving humanitarian aid to Iraqi ethnic Kurds and enforcing a no-fly zone that keeps Iraqi planes out of the region's airspace.

In Ankara Tuesday, the Turkish army reported that its troops had killed 97 Turkish Kurd separatists in the past 24 hours as it completed the first phase of its operation.

The deaths announced by Turkish military spokesman Colonel Dogu Silahcioglu

raised to 269 the number of PKK fighters reported killed since Turkey poured 35,000 soldiers backed by tanks and warplanes across the border on March 20.

Ms. Shelly reiterated Tuesday that the United States "would like to see the troops withdrawn as soon as possible."

And, with a visit by Ms. Ciller on the horizon, Ms. Shelly said it would be up to Turkey to follow up on the interest it has expressed in taking an international approach to handling the situation in the border area.

Meanwhile, President Bill Clinton's administration was defending a request for \$100 million in aid to Turkey, telling lawmakers the U.S. ally held vital strategic importance for the United States.

"Turkey is now at the crossroads of every major issue important to us on the continent," Ralph Johnson, coordinator for U.S. assistance to Eastern Europe at the State Department, told a hearing of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

The aid package came under fire from lawmakers who said support for Turkey was not warranted in light of Ankara's attack on Kurdish rebels.

Germany earlier in the day suspended a \$107-million aid programme to Turkey as European criticism of the operation continued unabated.

"It's time to not support the additional assistance," Democratic Senator Joseph Biden of Delaware said.

Democratic Senator Claiborne Pell of Rhode Island said he was concerned about the use of U.S. weapons in the attack on rebels in Iraq and in northern Cyprus, which Turkey has occupied since 1974.

But Mr. Johnson described the Turkish attack on Kurds as "self-defence" and branded the PKK as a "terrorist organisation with a long record not just in Turkey but in Europe."

He stressed that the current regime in Ankara was "democratic, pro-Western" and espoused a moderate form of Islam while maintaining its place in the Muslim world.

In Ankara, Ms. Ciller moved to calm Western fears that the incursion could turn into a military occupation.

"Turkish forces will withdraw as soon as their objectives are achieved," she insisted, adding that it was an action of "legitimate defence."

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Egypt hangs 2 for Mahfouz attack

CAIRO (Agencies) — Two Islamic militants were hanged Wednesday for the attempted murder of Nobel Prize-winning novelist Naguib Mahfouz, the official agency MENA reported.

Mohammad Nagi Mohammad Mustafa, 21, was sentenced in January for stabbing the writer in the neck in October, seriously wounding him.

Mohammad Khodair Al Mahlawi, 22, was found guilty of having planned the attack. Both were accused of belonging to the outlawed Al Gamaa Islamiyah.

The death sentences handed down by a military high court were ratified by President Hosni Mubarak at the end of February. Eleven others were sentenced to hard labour for terms ranging from three years to life.

Mr. Mahfouz, 83, was stabbed twice on Oct. 14 outside his Cairo home by Nagi. He underwent emergency surgery and a massive blood transfusion after the attack which left his right arm partially paralysed.

He became the only Arab writer to win the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1988.

Muslim militants had threatened him in 1989 for his "The Children of Gebelawi," in which he depicts God as a father and the prophets as his children.

Doctors said the ailing novelist was lucky to survive the attack. He spent seven weeks in hospital and the knife damaged a nerve, seriously impairing his ability to use his writing hand.

Mustafa, 21, vowed after his sentencing he would try to kill Mahfouz again if given a chance. "Tell Naguib Mahfouz that if Mohammad Nagi came to him again he won't let him live," he shouted as 15 other defendants chanted Islamic slogans.

Al Azhar, the highest Islamic authority in Egypt, has banned "The Children of Gebelawi" on the grounds

that it violates Islamic rules by including characters who clearly represent God and the prophets.

Government ministers flocked to Mr. Mahfouz's bedside during his convalescence, declaring their support and insisting the Azhar ban, in effect for 35 years, was not government policy.

Egyptian newspapers leapt on the announcements, publishing the entire book in lengthy supplements, even though Mr. Mahfouz said the time was not right for its publication.

Mr. Mahfouz, awarded the Nobel Prize in 1988, has publicly opposed Islamic militancy. Before the attack he had consistently declined a government offer of police protection.

Two other men were given life sentences by the military court — where President Mubarak has referred numerous cases against militants since 1992.

In the last three years Egypt's military courts have sentenced 62 people to death, forty-five of them have been executed.

Meanwhile, suspected Muslim militants shot dead a farmer and wounded six people, including three policemen, when they attacked a village in southern Egypt, the Interior Ministry said on Wednesday.

A ministry statement said gunmen opened fire on Tuesday night as residents and policemen were sitting in front of a house in the village of Mehres, near Minya province, 260 kilometres south of Cairo. The attackers escaped.

The ministry identified the dead farmer as Mohammad Abdullah Hassan. It added that the wounded were taken to hospital for treatment.

Security sources said the gunmen are believed to be members of Gamaa. The Gamaa has been leading a campaign of violence since 1992 to overthrow President Mubarak's government and establish a strict Islamic state.

Kabul lion survives attack

KABUL (AFP) — A lion in war-torn Kabul's zoo was wounded in a grenade attack allegedly carried out by relatives of a man who was mauled to death after climbing into the animal's cage, zoo officials said Wednesday.

Eyewitness said three people entered the zoo late Monday and one of them hurled three hand grenades into the lion's open enclosure, injuring it in the face after it savaged the young man's throat a day earlier.

The blasts blew off the male's upper lip and reportedly blinded it in one eye and left it with only partial sight in the other. A female which was also in the enclosure escaped injury, zoo officials said.

The man who threw the grenades — who both eyewitnesses and zoo officials said were relatives of the mauling victim — was arrested by the Kabul authorities, official sources said.

Paying visitors to the zoo Wednesday saw a mobile but very sick-looking male lion whose face was swollen and scarred, although he was able to wander about the enclosure. At one point he walked straight into a wall.

The drama began Sunday when the unidentified man clambered into the den and began playing with the animals, the zoo keeper told AFP.

He said that at first the two lions for a short while tolerated the man as he played with the male before a large crowd of encouraging onlookers, but suddenly the animal attacked him.

"The man stroked the male lion's mane and talked to it, but after he pulled the lion's lips open to examine its teeth the lion bit him in the throat," the keeper explained.

The lion did not eat the intruder, whose body was later recovered by zoo staff after the lions were distracted and locked into another cage.

The zoo keeper pleaded for outside help for the lions, saying staff did not have the necessary drugs to tranquilise in order to carry out the medical treatment required.

Kabul zoo only has eight live animals left: two lions, four bears, a boar and a vulture.

A tiger recently died from shrapnel wounds after a mortar bomb exploded near its cage during recent factional fighting in war ravaged south Kabul.

Due to its frontline location, the zoo — which opened in 1967 with a rich collection of both endemic and exotic animals, has been reduced to a pitiful collection of smashed cages, derelict bunkers.

The lions have survived nearly three years of ferocious fighting as various factions battle for control of the capital.

Kabul University to reopen next week

KABUL (AFP) — Kabul University, recently a frontline in the factional battle for control of the Afghan capital, is being cleaned up for a grand reopening by President Burhanuddin Rabbani in a week's time.

"President Rabbani has agreed to officially open Kabul University next Tuesday," said Dr. Amir Shah Hassanyar, the university president.

Dr. Hassanyar, who received his doctorate in desert ecology from Colorado State University in the United States, said that even during the week-long cleanup campaign, students were registering for the spring semester.

"We used to have 11,000 students on campus before the fighting started; so far, 1,200 have re-enrolled," Dr. Hassanyar said.

Due to its location on the

frontline between pro-and anti-Rabbani factions, the university has suffered extensive damage from bombardment and looting. It is reaping the benefit from the end to the latest round of factional fighting.

"We have lost everything. Our preliminary estimate is more than 50 million dollars in material damage," Dr. Hassanyar said.

In addition, Dr. Hassanyar lamented what he called "cultural losses" suffered during the gradual destruction of the university library.

"The library was a rich source of research material which scholars from Iran, Pakistan and India used to come to study," he noted.

Staff cleaning up the library have re-stacked thousands of volumes that had fallen from shelves blown down by exploding artillery

rounds, but as in all other faculty buildings, most of the furniture and electrical fittings have been plundered.

In the natural science faculty, a headless skeleton hung in an empty laboratory, an apt symbol of the vandalism and destruction perpetrated in the centre of learning.

U.S.-made industrial tools such as Cincinnati lathes and Milwaukee drills in the engineering faculty have either been smashed beyond repair or stripped of saleable parts.

"We will only be teaching the theoretical parts of our courses, and even then students will probably have to sit on the floor," commented the deputy dean of engineering, Professor A.W. Zia.

The rocket launcher that used to be parked inside the fine arts department has now gone, but so has most of the

roof of the building, although the sandbags of a machinegun post are still in place, along with thousands of empty cartridge cases.

"I doubt if many of our students will return while this place looks like a battlefield," said a forlorn lecturer in painting and sculpture.

But the massive cleanup operation now underway, and the scores of young women students strolling across the campus grounds, were signs that the 63-year-old Kabul University would be resurrected.

Dr. Hassanyar has appealed to affiliated universities in the United States and France for help with the massive reconstruction work that is needed.

"Kabul University cannot die. It is the training centre of experts for the future of Afghanistan," he said.

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 77111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

17:00 Les Ratons Laveurs
17:30 Des Heros Ordinaires
18:00 News in French
18:30 Road To Avonlea
19:45 Planete En Equation
20:30 The Blue Revolution
21:10 E. N. G.
22:00 News in English
22:20 Feature film: "Diving In"
23:50 The Exile

PRAYER TIMES

04:00 Fajr
05:23 (Sunrise) Duha
11:40 Dhuhur
15:12 Asr
17:57 Maghrib
19:16 Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church
Swittek, Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 632785
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624990
Church of the Assumption Tel. 625241
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757
Transcendental Church Tel. 623266
Church of the Assumption Tel. 625241
Anglican Church Tel. 630851, Tel. 628543

Armenian Catholic Church Tel.

771331

Armenian Orthodox Church Tel.

773261

St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751

652526

Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel.

624328

German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 684195

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 654932

Church of Nazareth Tel. 675691

The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

Temperatures are expected to drop slightly with moderate weather conditions continuing to prevail and winds southwesterly moderate.

In Aqaba, winds will be northerly moderate and seas calm.

Min./Max. temp.

Amman 9/20

Aqaba 14/26

Desert 5/21

Jordan Valley 13/25

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 22 Aqaba 26 Humidity readings: Amman 16 per cent, Aqaba 26 per cent.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:

Dr. Arafat Al Ashhab 602507

Dr. Sa'ad Al 788285

Dr. Yahya Abdul Salam 736072

Dr. Rauf Zaitoun 888685

Firas Pharmacy 661912

Ferdous pharmacy 718336

Al Asma pharmacy 637025

Nairoukh pharmacy 623672

Al Salam pharmacy 636730

Shmeihan pharmacy 644945

Nairoukh pharmacy 623672

Najib pharmacy 847632

IRBID:

Dr. Ali Al Omari 272032

Al Quds pharmacy (-)

ZARQA:

Dr. Walid Halach 982799

Khalifah pharmacy 983417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111

Civil Defence Department 661111

Civil Defence Immediate 661176

Rescue 630341

Civil Defence Emergency 199

Blood Bank 775121

Highway Police 843402



Her Highness Princess Basma addresses a national symposium on Population and Development (Petra photo)

Princess Basma calls for accurate population information

(Petra) — Her Highness Princess Basma stressed the need for accurate information on population and development during a speech delivered at a symposium entitled "After the Cairo Conference on Population and Development," Princess Basma said Jordan was drawing up detailed plans that meet the actual needs of the people taking into account the current changes in the society since, she said, the population issue is the basic pillar of the developmental process.

Princess Basma said Jordan has exerted strenuous efforts despite obstacles and difficulties and its limited resources.

She said this symposium is of special importance because it aims at developing a mechanism whereby all recommendations and resolutions adopted at the Cairo conference last September will be taken into consideration.

She stressed on the role of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in the development process.

In his speech, Minister of Labour, Nader Abu Sha'ar expressed hope that the symposium will come up with the appropriate recommendations that would help not only decision-makers but also researchers and those interested in population issues in drawing up the appropriate strategy for the development of our society.

Princess Basma urges Danish government, business to participate in Amman economic summit

(Petra) — The Jordanian Association of Manufacturers (JAM) urged the Danish government and business to actively participate in the international economic summit which will be held in Amman in May.

Mr. Hamdi Tabbaa, who is head of the JAM, said the summit would contribute to the development of the Danish economy and to the economic growth of Jordan.

He noted that despite the economic agreements signed between Jordan and Denmark, the trade balance was still heavily in favour of the Scandinavian country.

"It is possible to increase this imbalance by increasing Jordanian exports to Danish markets... and by increasing Danish technical and economic assistance to Jordan, particularly those going to the private sector in technological, training and agricultural fields," said Mr. Tabbaa.

The JBA chief also focused on Jordan's central role in the Middle East peace process and the signing of the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty, underlining that the Kingdom is committed to the requirements of peace.

Peace is an important factor for development, he asserted, and noted that people of the region are looking forward to reaping the fruits of peace and hoping that this will help them address the problems of poverty and unemployment.

JBA Secretary Thabet Taher also addressed the meeting and outlined business and investment opportunities in Jordan and recent developments in the Middle East region.

He said Jordan's economy is based on the free market model and encourages the private sector's role.

He added that there was a growing interest by foreign investors to establish new industries in Jordan with the objective of marketing their products in neighbouring countries.

Mr. Taher emphasised that there were tremendous investment opportunities in Jordan, particularly in tourism, transport, communications, water, energy and infrastructure fields, singling out industries that rely on Dead Sea minerals, phosphate and potash.

Addressing the meeting was also JBA Vice-President Fakhri Bilbeisi who affirmed that the Amman Financial Market was the most developed in the region.

Mr. Bilbeisi said the Jordanian labour force constitutes about one quarter of the Kingdom's population.

He also said the Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ) managed to stabilise the dinar and control inflation within reasonable limits that do not exceed five per cent.

The JBA delegation arrived in Copenhagen Tuesday and is scheduled to arrive in Paris April 1 for similar talks with French businessmen and government officials.



Hamdi Tabbaa

Road accidents seminar participants divided over effectiveness of draft law

By Beatrix Immenkamp
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Participants of a seminar on "Road Accidents — their causes and ways of avoiding them" were divided over the effectiveness, in curbing accidents, of a new draft law on traffic, which was submitted by the Ministry of Interior to the Cabinet yesterday.

The draft law, which proposes stiffer fines for traffic violations, was criticised for targeting the effects, rather than the causes of reckless driving, which is a major source of accidents.

It includes plans to introduce a point system for traffic violations, to establish a mechanism whereby the driving licences of offenders are withdrawn, and to raise penalties for drivers who cause accidents, especially those with fatal consequences.

The draft law also proposes to put stricter controls on driving schools.

For Mohammad Dabbas, president of the Jordanian Society for the Prevention of Car Accidents (JSPCA), this is a move in the right direction. In an interview with the Jordan Times, he particularly criticised the authorities' failure, so far, to introduce exams to guarantee that driving instructors meet accepted standards.

Mr. Dabbas said that, in general, primary efforts should be directed towards the education of traffic participants, rather than towards punishing offenders.

The JSPCA has been lobbying to make traffic-awareness education an integral part of children's education from kindergarten up to university level. In the words of Mr. Dabbas, a vital role should be played by the media in teaching correct traffic behaviour.

Criticism was also levelled by Mr. Dabbas against the unequal enforcement of traffic laws by the police, reducing their effectiveness.

"If people feel that the law is imposed in a just way, (not bypassing those with the right connections), they will start to reconsider their behaviour," Mr. Dabbas said.

The seminar, held at the Royal Cultural Centre (RCC), was attended by ministers and senior officials from the ministries of Interior, Culture, Education, Information, Transport, Public Works and Communications, the mayor of Amman, members of the Public Security Department (PSD), the president of the Engineers Association, the president of the Royal Automobile Club, a speaker from Petra news agency as well as heads and representatives of several other associations.

Papers presented at the seminar, organised by the Ministry of Culture in cooperation with the JSPCA, discussed traffic legislation, drivers' training, the effects of engineering and organisational factors on curbing the number of accidents, and the role of the media.

Participants came up with a series of recommendations, including forming a higher Jordanian board for road safety, which should be given the financial, technical and administrative assistance to develop a comprehensive strategy for ensuring safety on the roads.

It was also recommended to set up an institute for traffic training, able to provide optimal training for security officers and drivers.

Further, it was suggested that traffic education courses should become obligatory parts of the national curriculum in all educational stages.

Finally, steps should be taken to prepare a national information campaign in coordination with the mass media to raise traffic awareness. This campaign should target intellectuals, clergymen, the family and educational institutions, the participants agreed.



Interior Minister Salameh Hamad and Amman Mayor Mamdouh Abbadi attend the seminar on road accidents (Petra photo)

Ministry waits for pilgrimage permits

AMMAN (Petra) — Around 19,000 Jordanians registered for the pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina this year, but the number of pilgrims who will be granted permits by Saudi Arabia is yet not clear, according to Minister of Awqaf and Religious Affairs Abdul Salam Abbadi.

According to the quota system, that was earlier set by the ministers of Islamic states, 1,000 pilgrims out of one million inhabitants in each country are allowed to perform the pilgrimage each year.

Dr. Abbadi said the procedures adopted for pilgrimage will be the same as in previous years, but some amendments and improvements will be introduced this year to facilitate the process of registration, transportation and accommodation.

In a press conference Wednesday held at the King Abdullah Mosque, Dr. Abbadi said priority would be given to those born in 1932 or before. But age conditions do not apply to women's escorts (women pilgrims should be accompanied by male escorts in accordance with Islamic Sharia). The escort, or the companion, should be a brother, husband, father or a close relative.

The minister said a religious advisor will be accompanying pilgrims in each bus.

Dr. Abbadi said the Palestinian National Authority will be in charge of all pilgrims from the West Bank and Gaza Strip, but Jordan is ready to offer all necessary facilities to them. As for the Arab Israelis, Jordan will undertake the necessary arrangements for their travels and registration.

Jordan, EU to launch talks on trade 'partnership agreement'

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Jordan will launch formal negotiations with the European Union (EU) in two months on a "partnership agreement," a senior official has said.

But the envisaged agreement also implies sweeping changes not only in Jordan's laws and regulations but also in industrial production such as components, packing, quality control etc.

This is a process that could take several years before the standards and specifications of Jordanian products as well as the rules and regulations governing foreign trade are raised to a level compatible with those of the EU member states.

Jordan is a beneficiary under the General System of Preferences (GSP), which, at its height, included most of the European countries as key players.

But this role declined in the past decade. Now, the U.S. and Japan are the main countries which extend trade privileges to GSP signatories.

Europe has always taken a positive approach to Jordan's efforts to increase its trade, but the Kingdom had not always been able to raise to the level of requirements of international business against stiff competition, European diplomats say.

One of the immediate elements in Jordan's favour is the absence of any quota for any product that could be exported from the Kingdom to the European markets. But this situation could change once local industries raise their output and exports and more producers come into play, the diplomats noted.

His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, addressing a British trade delegation this month, affirmed that the European Union was offering a special partnership agreement to Jordan. The Crown Prince said it might take up to 12 years for Jordan to meet with all the requirements that go with the accord that would raise the level of the Kingdom's trade and industry to that of Europe.

Mohammad Smadi, undersecretary of the Ministry of Trade and Industry, said in a lecture at the Rotary Club on Tuesday that Jordan had already launched informal contacts with EU member states ahead of the formal negotiations with the European trading bloc on the "partnership agreement."

A formal "partnership agreement" with the EU would qualify Jordan to benefit from \$13 billion in funds that the union has set aside for the region in the next 10 years, Dr. Smadi said.

Dr. Smadi, quoted by the Jordan News Agency, Petra, also noted that Jordan had started preparing legislation that would allow the Kingdom to enter a "new era in which it could make its economic situation open with the requirements of the times."

This implies risks as well as opportunities, Dr. Smadi affirmed.

The new era requires that the Jordanian economy open itself to interaction with international economy and attract foreign investments, the official said.

Dr. Smadi conceded that one of the key obstacles that impede the success of a partnership agreement between the European Union and Arab countries was the huge disparity between their economies.

Arab assets represent only 10 per cent of the EU member countries and unless the Arab countries in the region receive aid and assistance this gap will double in the next 10 years, he said.

Dr. Smadi, noting the proximity between Europe and the Middle East, said European aid to the countries of the region was as beneficial to the Europeans as it was for the Arabs since stability in the region was in the interest of Europe.

Stability cannot be achieved without bridging the gap between the economies and this could not come unless the income of the Arab citizen is increased through external assistance, both aid and loans, he said.

The official also discussed the links between Europe and Jordan and the various protocols and agreements signed between the two sides as well as the hopes that Jordan is attaching to these agreements, Petra said.

The European Union is organising a major conference in Barcelona, Spain, in the second half of this year. At that conference the union is expected to unveil a programme that could provide a much-needed stepping stone for Jordan to enter the lucrative European market.

WHAT'S GOING ON

- FILM**
entitled "Lean on Me" at the American Center on Friday at 5:00 p.m.
- ID AMMAN DRAMA FESTIVAL**
plays (in Arabic) entitled "Ghazir Al Leil" and "Eyes of Maria and Sindbad" respectively at 7:00 and 8:30 p.m. on Thursday at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- plays entitled "The Theatre of Sizarya" and "The Maria and Sindbad" on Friday respectively at 7:00 and 8:30 p.m. at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- CONCERT**
by Mingo Saldívar and his band — Los Cuatro Espadas (in a programme containing variety of country and Latin American music) on Friday at Philadelphia Hotel at 8:00 p.m.
- DIALOGUE**
with Dr. Omar Al Khalil at Abdul Hameed Foundation on Thursday at 6:00 p.m.
- EXHIBITIONS**
of prize-winning paintings by Czech students at the Royal Cultural Centre.
of oil paintings by Hamoud Chantout at the Gallery, Fuhis.
of oil paintings by Yousef Baddawi at Alhady.
of art by Ahmad Al Bahili and Mohammad Phoenix Gallery for Culture and Art.

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Pyongyang wants U.S. supply new reactors

Pyongyang, S. Korea draft bilateral ties declaration

(Agencies)—North Korea wants a U.S. firm to supply core parts for nuclear reactors to it by Washington. South Korean participation is restricted to non-technical assistance, South Korean officials said Wednesday.

North Korea said South Korea's offer to supply reactors, in light of technology standards, would cause serious problems, a senior North Korean Foreign Ministry official said two days after the two sides agreed to an abrupt end to talks.

Pyongyang demanded the U.S. take charge of the reactor facilities, which require sophisticated technology, the official was quoted as saying.

Pyongyang also said it would not take part in the talks, saying the U.S. was trying to build the reactors to build the U.S. nuclear power.

The U.S. and North Korea officials prematurely broke off their latest round of talks Monday after new proposals from Pyongyang on ways of untangling a deadlock.

South Korea is to hold discussions with the United States and Japan on the new proposals, which the North Wednesday described as "epochal."

Pyongyang's official Korean Central News Agency said U.S. officials "promised to study our proposal" and

facilities suspected of being used to produce atomic weapons in exchange for two new 1,000-megawatt light-water reactors — which produce less weapons-grade plutonium than its old graphite-core units.

The North was also to receive free fuel oil and improved relations with Washington as part of the deal.

But Pyongyang has refused to allow South Korea — which will largely bankroll the \$4 billion cost of the changeover — to be the main contractor and supplier of the new nuclear reactors, stalling the accord's full implementation.

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South Korea is to hold discussions with the United States and Japan on the new proposals, which the North Wednesday described as "epochal."

Pyongyang's official Korean Central News Agency said U.S. officials "promised to study our proposal" and

meet again in mid-April in Berlin.

A North Korean official was quoted as saying that a solution now "entirely depends on the sincerity of our dialogue partner."

The U.S. embassy here Wednesday said Washington was still sticking to its position that South Korea should be the main contractor in the project to replace the North's suspected nuclear weapons research facilities.

In another development, the head of the U.S. Pacific Forces Command said in an interview published here Wednesday that North Korea was abiding by its nuclear-freeze deal with the United States on the ground.

"To date, the North Koreans have abided by the agreement," Admiral Richard Macke told the U.S. military newspaper Stars and Stripes during a visit here for talks with U.S. and South Korean officials.

"I don't trust them," he added. "But the framework agreement is not built on trust."

Meanwhile, Japanese and North Korean politicians are close to signing a declaration

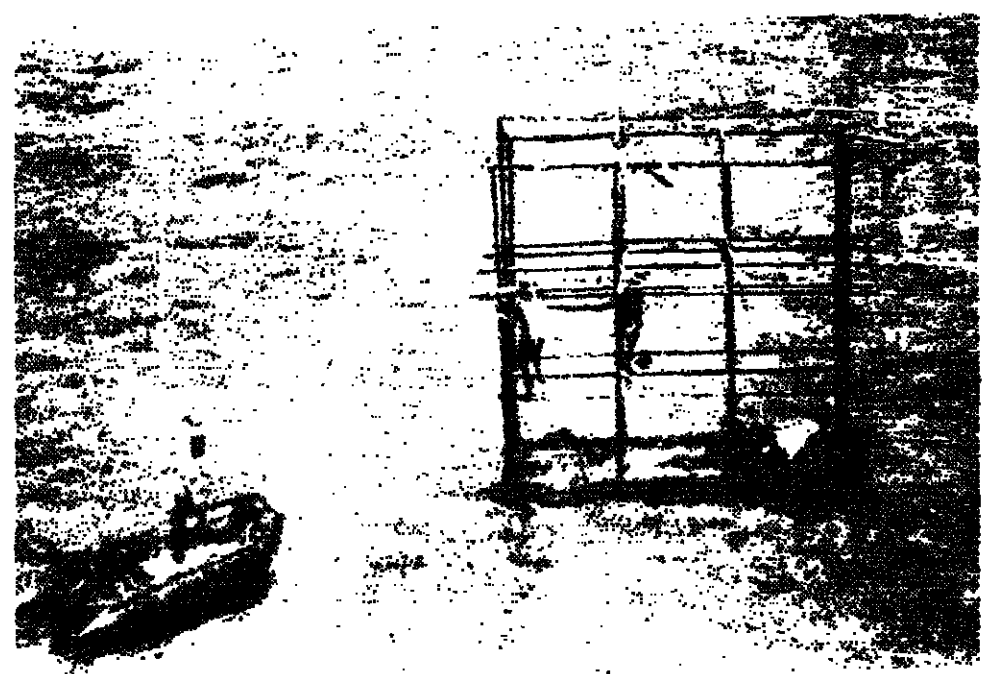
on restarting efforts to normalize diplomatic relations between their two countries, Japan's Kyodo News Agency said.

In a report from Pyongyang, Kyodo quoted sources in a Japanese delegation visiting North Korea to explore ways of reopening stalled talks on bilateral ties as saying the two sides could sign the declaration as soon as Thursday.

Kyodo said Tuesday that the two sides had agreed in principle that formal bilateral talks on setting up diplomatic relations between Pyongyang and Tokyo should restart.

The North Korean Workers' (Communist) Party and the Japanese delegation would sign the joint declaration Thursday if discussions go "smoothly," the delegation sources were quoted as saying. They said the document was expected to urge Tokyo and Pyongyang to make their best efforts to resume normalization talks without any conditions.

The influential Japanese delegation headed by former Foreign Minister Michio Watanabe arrived in Pyongyang Tuesday.



This photo released by the Armed Forces of the Philippines shows the Philippine Navy troops dismantling Chinese built structures in the Spratly Islands in the Manila-Chinese territory part of the disputed Spratly Islands.

Seven planes seized four Chinese fishing boats anchored in the nearby Allen Amie Reef and arrested 62 Chinese fishermen. The disputed Spratly Islands are claimed in whole or in part by Brunei, China, Malaysia, Philippines, Taiwan and Vietnam (AFP photo)

Manila dismantles more Spratly markers

MANILA (AFP) — Philippine troops destroyed territorial markers put up by China in the disputed Spratly Islands and Manila has rejected Beijing's appeals to free 62 fishermen arrested here last weekend, President Fidel Ramos announced Wednesday.

Mr. Ramos said the nearest of these spits was a mere 50 miles (81 kilometers) from the southwestern Philippine island of Palawan "and therefore clearly within Philippine territory."

All seven spits lie between the major Philippine island of Palawan and Pag-asa, one of seven Spratly Islands garrisoned by Philippine troops.

The twin actions marked a turn for the worse in the brewing bilateral dispute over the South China Sea archipelago, considered a regional powerbase.

The dispute erupted last month with Manila discovering what it describes as observation structures on spits erected by China on Mischief Reef, which is claimed by the Philippines.

Manila said the structures were being guarded by up to eight Chinese vessels, including at least three warships.

Mr. Ramos said the Philippine Navy "was forced to destroy various structures which were found to be made of metal frames, and remove markers with Chinese characters" on Thomas 1 and Thomas 2 shoals, Half Moon Shoal and Pennsylvania Reef.

Armed forces chief General Arturo Enrile earlier said the navy dynamited Chinese-made territorial markers on Jackson Atoll, Half Moon Shoal and Sabina Reef.

Cyanide and "several hundred sticks of dynamite and time delay fuses" were found on their four boats, and Manila earlier Wednesday officially notified the Chinese Ambassador Huang Guifang of its actions, he added.

Mr. Ramos said the fishermen's activities violated not only Philippine laws but international conventions on the environment, and thus "deserve condemnation by the international community."

The two governments held talks on the Spratlys in Beijing early last week, but no agreements were made.

Mr. Ramos said that "to show our sincerity and our desire for a peaceful resolution of the immediate problem of the Panganiban or Mischief Reef, we have not touched anything there."

"The Chinese themselves have brought international attention to their activities in these islets and shoals of the South China Sea by their actions in contributing to the destruction of the environment in the region," the president said.

10 days after Japan nerve-gas assault, chief suspects are still at large

TOKYO (AFP) — The Japanese are beginning to take aim at their police for refusing to crack down on the doomsday sect linked to the Tokyo subway — or even round up their leaders.

As the massive police search of the Aum Supreme Truth commune at Kamikubiki continued Wednesday, after a week of frightening finds linked to the horrific nerve-gas attack, the public mood became increasingly restive.

Investigation, aware that the whole world is monitoring the way the case is being solved.

After coming across tonnes of toxic chemicals at Kamikubiki that they described as the ingredients for sarin, the authorities last Sunday upgraded the operation against Aum, saying the cult was now suspected of "premeditated murder."

But more than 10 days after the subway attack, no move has been made to outlaw the sect, seize its assets or arrest its leaders, including the supreme chief, Shoko Asahara.

In this void, critics say, the leadership may have been given enough time to squirrel away assets or evidence linked to the case, or even flee abroad, to other countries where they have a following.

And whichever nihilistic group carried out the attack has had plenty of time to go into hiding or even plot another assault.

In virtually every other industrialized country, critics say, police faced with a case of this importance would carry out preventative arrests.

"Aum Supreme Truth is in no way a 'religious' group, but the worst kind of terrorist group," a rival sect, The Science of Happiness, said in a communique Wednesday.

"We believe the Japanese government, which has done nothing, cannot escape the blame. Who will take responsibility if 'the worst' happens? We ask the government to arrest Asahara, the terrorist leader, as quickly as possible."

Aum, in its defence, categorically denies any involvement in the attack that left 12 dead and more than 5,500 injured. Its lawyer, Yoshinobu Aoyama, daily appears on television, calmly reiterating that the piles of poisonous chemicals found at Aum's rural retreat was intended for fertilizer, pottery and computer manufacturing.

Sources close to the police say Japanese detectives are known for their thoroughness in preparing evidence, so as to ensure a water-tight case.

Mrs. Clinton calls for social welfare

NEW DELHI (AFP) — U.S. First Lady Hillary Clinton called Wednesday for global efforts to improve the lives of women and children, saying countries prospered only when their women prospered.

Mrs. Clinton, on the second day of her maiden trip to India, also told a select audience here that India would top the list of countries that will benefit from her \$100-million grant for women's education announced in Copenhagen.

"Every government should invest more resources in the education and health care of children, especially girls," Mrs. Clinton told a meeting organized by the Rajiv Gandhi Foundation where she was greeted with a standing ovation.

"This should be a priority that takes precedence over competing budgetary demands," she said.

As Mrs. Clinton spoke, some 60 opposition activists shouting "Mrs. Clinton go home" and "Stop killing Iraqi women and children" were briefly detained near the venue by police after some pushing and shoving.

The protest was organized by George Fernandes, a member of parliament who helped drive Coca-Cola out of India.

Mrs. Clinton, in her 20-minute speech, said women although constituted over half the world's population, "in country after country, they lack access to education, to health services, to jobs, to political and civil rights."

"One lesson the experience of the last several decades teaches is that where women prosper, countries prosper," she said.

India, where Mrs. Clinton arrived Tuesday, is the second stop on a 12-day South Asia tour providing her with an opportunity to gain first-hand knowledge.

Japan will be looked at as a very dangerous country if nothing is done," was a typical view in the street, voiced by Yoshiko Kanazawa, 36, a resident of Tokyo.

"When such a thing happens, the government must show leadership and do something definite."

"Other countries are seriously concerned that terrorists may now use the nerve gas as a weapon, as they used hijacks in the past," Asahi Shimbun said in a commentary. "We want the police to proceed with the

Mitterrand makes last grand mark on Paris skyline

PARIS (R) — French President Francois Mitterrand Thursday unveils the grandest and last of his architectural dreams for Paris, a vast National Library building that critics have branded a pharaonic fantasy.

A Defiant Mitterrand, 78, stricken with cancer and due to step down in May after 14 years in power, has cited the project — the world's biggest and most expensive national book repository — as one of his proudest personal achievements.

Nicknamed the "Tres Grande Bibliotheque (Great Big Library)," the eight-billion franc (\$1.6 billion) colossus is his last legacy to the capital and will join such edifices as the Grand Louvre, the Grande Arche Of La Defense and the Bastille Opera.

In a bleak wasteland of crumbling industry and cheap housing in eastern Paris, four L-shaped grey towers

posed to represent open books standing upright dominate the River Seine.

The glass towers mark out a rectangle that is as big as the sprawling Place De La Concorde in central Paris and is designed to accommodate 3,600 readers and 2,500 staff below an esplanade of rare Amazonian ipoc wood.

For the daily Le Monde, the complex echoes Mr. Mitterrand's architectural style, embodied in the New Louvre's glass pyramid — "angular, cold and glazed. In a word: pharaonic."

The library is still only an empty shell, with books, furniture and computers missing, but the Socialist Mitterrand was anxious to mark its birth before he left office in May. The opening ceremony proper will fall to his successor in 1997.

Mr. Mitterrand's conservative foes have tried repeatedly to have the project scaled down or scrapped. Running

costs alone are estimated at 1.3 billion francs (\$265 million) a year, 10 per cent of the Culture Ministry's budget.

Critics have also ridiculed plans to store the books in the towers and confine readers to ground-level. The towers, where 40 per cent of up to 12 million books will be stored, have high-technology double glazing and computer-controlled blinds.

One petition signed by several hundred designers described the project as "spectacularly bad" and said storing books in towers, where they needed costly protection from sunlight and heat, was tantamount to folly.

Fire also would be devastating, the petitioners said, doubling the already complex computer system would as promised bring readers any book within 20 minutes.

Mr. Mitterrand's backers say the new library will be

more "democratic" than the Bibliotheque Nationale, the grand neoclassical building in central Paris it is replacing.

The existing facility is open to a limited number of scholars who have to join early morning queues to get a seat.

They also contrast the speed at which the Paris library was built — six years — and the sluggish pace of the new British Library in London, more than two decades in the making, still far from ready and also subject to much criticism.

At a media reception in January, Mr. Mitterrand said he had to defend his architectural projects, including the library, the Louvre Pyramid and the Opera House, against finance ministers who had accused him of "a prince's whims."

"I told them: 'You will never have an architecture policy if you make cuts all the time,'" he said.

While non-governmental organizations (NGOs) agree that child prostitution is a problem, there is little agreement on how many work streets in this country of 1 million. "It is not possible count young prostitutes if you count vaccination children," said sociologist Mar De Fatima Magliani of the Brazilian Centre for Infants and Children.

Julia Roberts, Lyle Lovett announce split

LOS ANGELES (AP) — The unlikely union between the pretty woman and high-haired hubby is over. The surprise marriage in 1992 of actress Julia Roberts and singer Lyle Lovett has ended. An official statement said the couple, who had been together for a year, had decided to end their relationship. The couple had been together for a year, had a son, and were expecting another child. The couple had been together for a year, had a son, and were expecting another child.

Prima Ballerina quits amid Bolshoi turmoil

MOSCOW (AP) — Prima Ballerina Nadezhda Pavlova has resigned from the Bolshoi theatre, the latest defection from the ailing company, Russian television program reported Tuesday. Pavlova quit "due to the change in the Bolshoi leadership," the Independent Television report said. There were further details immediately available. Earlier this month Yuri Grigorovich, stepping down as the Bolshoi's artistic director, setting off the biggest shakeup in the theatre's 219-year history. Grigorovich's resignation prompted 14 dancers to strike and cancel a performance for the first time ever. The Bolshoi, prosecuting the dancers, V. Dmitri Vasilyev, a former dancer with the 250-member company, was named a new artistic director March 18. Vasilyev has a plan to introduce a contract hiring system to the company. Adding to the confusion, Vladimir Kozlov, who had battled with Grigorovich over reorganizing the theatre, was fired on March 17 as general director by Russian President Boris Yeltsin. Kozlov was replaced by Grigorovich, accusing him of stifling dissent and innovation.

NGOs to discuss child prostitutes in Brazil

BRASILIA (AFP) — Brazilian anti-poverty and development groups are meeting Wednesday to discuss child prostitution, estimates of the number of under-age prostitutes range up to 10 million. Of particular concern is the increase in sex tourism, called here "pornotourism," in Recife and other coastal cities in northeastern Brazil. A recent estimate was that 10,000 foreigners, most from Europe, come to Recife every year. While non-governmental organizations (NGOs) agree that child prostitution is a problem, there is little agreement on how many work streets in this country of 1 million. "It is not possible count young prostitutes if you count vaccination children," said sociologist Mar De Fatima Magliani of the Brazilian Centre for Infants and Children.

India

was a tourist who lost her passport and another said her Singapore employers had just wanted to take advantage of a free flight home for her.

Contemplation, a 42-year-old mother of four, was hanged on March 17 after she confessed to killing another Filipina maid and drowning a three-year-old Singaporean boy.

Many Filipinos believe she was innocent and was framed to protect the real killer, a Singaporean.

Singapore said it investigated the allegations, made originally by another Filipina maid who came forward four years after the killings, and had found them baseless.

"I was put in jail," said returning Filipina Legali Morena. "I don't want to ever go back there. I had a very sad experience in Singapore."

Another maid said dozens of Filipina domestic workers in Singapore want to fly back but their employers were preventing them.

"They will be given jobs when they get back to their provinces," said Labour Secretary Nieves Confessor, who helped the maids as they stepped off the plane.

Mr. Confessor said about 15 maids were left in Singapore because their papers were not processed on time. There are about 70,000 Filipina maids in Singapore.

Mr. Confessor, who has come under fire along with other Filipino officials for failing to save Contemplation, later told a presidential inquiry Manila had filed several appeals with Singapore to delay the execution or extend clemency.

"I got scared," 26-year-old Judith Yanson told reporters who swarmed around the maids as they got off the plane.

A Philippine Air Force C-130 transport plane sent by President Fidel Ramos fetched 83 maids a diplomatic row between the two South East Asian allies over the hanging of Filipina maid Flor Contemplacion for double murder.

"I don't want to be hanged," the native of the central Philippine city of Bacolod said, tears streaming down her face.

Ms. Yanson said she was petrified she would meet the same fate as Contemplacion because the child she looked after used to bang his head against a wall due to emotional problems.

The parents of the child accused her of plotting to kill the infant, she said.

"The Singaporeans are horrible. I came home because I just did not want to suffer any more. One small mistake and they call you all sorts of names and say Filipinos are liars," said another maid, who was also in tears.

Their remarks were in clear contrast to other Filipinos living in Singapore who have said they are embarrassed by the emotional outpourings back home over the Contemplacion case.

Not all the passengers aboard the flight were fleeing maids. One woman said she

was a member of the Communist Party and was being sent to a re-education camp in the Philippines.

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Water may lurk under Mars surface — study

LONDON (R) — Large reservoirs of water may lurk under the surface of Mars, an American scientist reported Thursday.

Thomas Donahue of the University of Michigan studied the gases in the thin atmosphere of Mars and found evidence that some of Mars' original warm, wet atmosphere has survived in the form of underground water supplies.

He said it was the first evidence that Mars still had an active atmosphere with water cycling from liquid to gas, which on earth takes the form of rain, snow and evaporation.

Earlier analysis of the Martian atmosphere indicated that most of the water leaked away long ago. But Mr. Donahue reported in the science journal Nature that his observations using meteorites from Mars and comparisons with the Earth's atmosphere showed there could still be a lot of water left.

"The modern crystal reservoirs of Martian water must be quite large — at least several metres in global equivalent depth," Mr. Donahue, a physicist specialising in the atmospheres of planets, wrote.

Water may lurk under Mars surface — study

He compared the ratio of deuterium, a form of hydrogen, to normal hydrogen in both the atmosphere and in the rocks from Mars. He found evidence of large reservoirs of water in the past which had only been partially depleted.

The frozen water in the ice caps at the North and South poles of the planets could occasionally melt and add to the water stored in the crust, Mr. Donahue added.

His findings do not, however, explain in any way the "canals" seen on Mars by early astronomers.

"Those canals were definitely artefacts of the observing process and we have had several orbiters and fly-bys that have examined the surface of Mars in great detail and shown no canals," Mr. Donahue said in a telephone interview.

"There are clearly, however, what seems to be river channels and flood plains," he added. "It supports the notion that life may have developed (on Mars) in niches because there was water and there is no way we can understand the development of complex life forms in the absence of water."

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كندا في الوطن



Russian Orthodox priest Father Kipriyan, wearing army fatigues, holds a crucifix in his right hand while blessing a Russian soldier about to leave Grozny for the Gudermes

region, where heavy fighting between federal troops and Chechen units are still continuing (AFP photo)

Karadzic vows to use force to change Bosnia map

PALE, Bosnia (Agencies) — Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic has said he will use force to determine "the face of the map" in Bosnia unless a political settlement to the war is reached quickly.

Mr. Karadzic also dismissed Monday's warning from the new U.N. commander in Bosnia British General Rupert Smith, that he would call NATO air strikes if Serbs persisted in targeting U.N.-declared safe areas.

"Our basic goal is recognition of the sovereignty and independence of (the Bosnian Serb Self-Declared Republic) SRSPKA and territorial integrity," Mr. Karadzic told Bosnian Serb television late Tuesday.

"Unless (this) is reached peacefully and by political means soon, our soldiers will determine the face of the map of former Bosnia-Herzegovina the borders will be where they set their boot," SRNA, the Bosnian Serb News Agency, quoted him as saying.

Mr. Karadzic said the Serbs would disregard Gen. Smith's threat of NATO air strikes "but if the U.N. calls in air strikes then we will break off all relations with them... and consider them hostile troops," he said.

Responding to government attacks on two key com-

munications facilities in northeast and central Bosnia, the Serbs shelled Muslim civilian centres last weekend, severely wounding several people.

Last year, following NATO air strikes on Serb positions as their forces mounted an assault on the western safe area of Bihać, vital parts of the U.N. operation in Bosnia were brought to their knees.

Retaliating for the air strikes, Serbs took U.N. peacekeepers hostage and blocked supply convoys across their territory.

Mr. Karadzic, whose forces now control 70 per cent of Bosnia's territory, has repeatedly rejected a peace plan drawn up by the major power contact groups which divides the country into two roughly equal entities.

Together with his Muslim and Croat foes he signed a country-wide ceasefire due to expire on April 30. But a Muslim offensive against Serb positions on Mount Vlasic and the Majevica Hills last week shattered the truce.

International mediators are keen to renew and extend the ceasefire until a peaceful solution to the war is found.

In more fighting talk that has characterised his response to apparent gains by the governments forces dur-

ing their offensive, Mr. Karadzic said there will be no peaceful territorial settlement.

"They (Muslims) will be left only with what they can hold on to militarily. For instance, if there is no political settlement dividing Sarajevo into two parts, then Sarajevo will be Serb," the Bosnian Serb leader said.

U.N. special envoy Yasushi Akashi Wednesday singled out the Bosnian government for condemnation in a broadside against both of Bosnia's warring parties for violating a country-wide truce.

Warnings of "incalculable consequences for the region as a whole," Mr. Akashi said in a statement released in Sarajevo: "The parties to the conflict... appear determined to plunge Bosnia into a new war."

He said a lack of cooperation "by all sides, but especially the government side, underscores the need for the immediate return to the peace process to prevent a further deterioration in the situation."

Mr. Akashi described 10-day-old offensives by Muslim-led government troops around Tuzla and Travnik as "clear breaches" of a ceasefire which the government and the Bosnian

Serbs signed on Dec. 31 and is meant to last until May.

Meanwhile, the U.N. Protection Force (UNPROFOR) reported a drop in the level of fighting in the northeast, near Tuzla, and central Bosnia, near Travnik, because of snow storms.

Fighting picked up overnight in the northeast Majevica Hills, near a television relay station, but winter conditions were preventing a real surge in the battle, UNPROFOR spokesman Major Hervé Gourmelon said.

A total of 203 heavy weapon detonations were monitored overnight in the area, along with light arms firing near the Stolice TV Tower, an indication that Serbs still held the vital communications installation, Maj. Gourmelon said.

UNPROFOR officials earlier suggested that Bosnian government forces had captured the Stolice Tower, east of Tuzla, a report denied by the Serbs.

Informed sources here said many casualties from recent fighting were suffering from frost-bite.

The Bosnian government appeared to have been caught by surprise by the sudden change in weather, which brought more than 20 centimetres of snow to Sarajevo this week.

Balladur gains slightly in polls but stays third

PARIS (AP) — Premier Edouard Balladur rose slightly in two opinion polls released Tuesday on next month's French presidential election, but still trailed in third place, raising doubts he would make the runoff vote in May.

Front-runner Jacques Chirac stayed well ahead, unchanged with the support of 26 per cent of decided voters, according to a Louis Harris poll and dropping one point to 27.5 per cent according to a survey by the polling firm IFOP.

In the Louis Harris poll Socialist Lionel Jospin dropped two points to 20 per cent and Mr. Balladur gained one point to 19 per cent.

Mr. Jospin held steady at 22 per cent and Mr. Balladur gained one point to 18 per cent according to the IFOP poll.

Mr. Chirac would take the second round with 56-62 per cent of the vote against either challenger, according to the two surveys.

French polls do not give margins of error, but Mr. Balladur is within striking distance of passing Mr. Jospin as telephone surveys of this nature generally have a margin error of 3 per cent.

Since some 40 per cent of eligible voters say they are still undecided, wide swings are still possible.

Voters go to the polls on April 23 to choose a successor to Socialist President Francois Mitterrand. If no candidate wins 50 per cent, the top two finishers proceed to the run-off on May 7.

Meanwhile French extreme-right leader Jean-Marie Le Pen boasted Wednesday that he had gathered more than enough endorse-

ments from locally elected officials to stand in next month's presidential election.

Mr. Le Pen, accompanied by several dozen cheering, flag-waving supporters of his National Front Party, submitted 500 signatures to the Paris headquarters of the country's Constitutional Council.

He had complained several times in recent days that many mayors and locally elected councillors who promised to back him were withdrawing support because of threat.

For a place on the ballot in the two-round elections, on April 23 and May 7, candidates must win the endorsement of 500 elected officials from at least 30 different departments by April 4.

Bruno Megret, National Front deputy head, said the

party finally mustered about 360 signatures.

Mr. Le Pen told reporters that rightist Philippe De Villiers and Communist Robert Hue were the most active rival politicians seeking to prevent him from standing.

Both men could benefit from a Le Pen withdrawal since he appeals to segments of both of their electorates.

Mr. Le Pen had threatened legal action against Mr. De Villiers and Mr. Hue whom he accused of intimidating mayors to prevent them from endorsing his presidential campaign.

"France for the French" — is making his third run for the presidency. He appeals to a strong anti-Arab mood among voters with fiery attacks on immigration and corruption.

Simpson's limousine driver bolsters prosecution time frame for murder

LOS ANGELES (AP) — O.J. Simpson rose in court and smiled as a limousine driver told jurors the tall, drawy ex-football player was the same size as a person the driver said he saw entering Simpson's home the night of a double murder last June.

Jurors took notes Tuesday as Allan Park, a key witness in the prosecution's case against Simpson, offered their potentially incriminating details.

— He said he saw no white Ford Bronco when he pulled to Simpson's gate at 10:22 p.m. the night of the killings, then in the driveway or on a street.

— During the limo drive to airport on a mild, foggy night, Simpson repeatedly explained he was hot; he led down a rear window turned on the air conditioning.

— Simpson was protective of a small black bag the limo driver saw on his driveway and did not see at the airport when Simpson helped unload luggage prior to catching a flight to Chicago.

Simpson, 47, a professional football star who became an actor and television sports

commentator, is one of the most famous Americans ever to go on trial for murder. He faces life in prison if convicted.

The prosecution also disclosed Tuesday that it has a cellular phone record indicating Simpson called the home of his ex-wife, Nicole Brown Simpson, the afternoon of June 12, 1994, before their daughter's dance recital.

Although Mr. Park testified he could say Simpson was the same person he saw slipping into the house, he said the person was Simpson's size, about 6 feet (1.8 metres) tall and weighing about 200 pounds (90 kilograms). He said the person was black and was wearing dark clothing; a previous witness said Simpson wearing a dark jogging suit that night.

Five minutes after the person entered the house, Mr. Park said, Simpson emerged wearing a white shirt and jeans, ready to leave for the airport.

Mr. Park said he first saw the person at about 10:55 p.m., 40 minutes after the time prosecutors say Ms. Simpson and Ronald Goldman were slain two miles

three (kilometres) away at her condominium.

The driver also said Simpson took possession of a small black bag that was among the pieces of luggage to be loaded into the limousine.

"He said, 'I'll get it,'" Mr. Park recalled but said he wasn't sure if Simpson placed the bag in the car or in the trunk.

Mr. Simpson's former houseguest, Brian "Kato" Kaelin, also testified that he tried to help Simpson with a small bag that night, and Simpson told him, "I'll get it."

Mr. Kaelin left the stand Tuesday after five days, most of which were filled with tense prosecution questioning.

Transcripts released Tuesday indicated the cellular phone call, which lasted four minutes, was made at 2:18 p.m. from the Riviera Country Club, where Simpson had played golf and cards last June 12.

Deputy District Attorney Marcia Clark indicated that a woman at the country club who saw Simpson speaking angrily on the phone would be called to testify.

Major rejects early election

LONDON (R) — British Prime Minister John Major, taking a swipe at his critics, said his Conservative government would serve out its full five-year term of office and he ruled out the prospect of an early general election.

He also made clear he would fight any challenge to his leadership of the Conservative Party.

Opposition Labour Party leader Tony Blair has put his party, which is enjoying leads of up to 35 percentage points over the Conservatives in public opinion polls, on standby for a snap election and, in the hot-house atmosphere of parliament, there has been talk of a challenge to Mr. Major.

"This is a five-year parliament. We were elected for five years. I have no particular reason to believe it will be much shorter than that," Mr. Major, who must call a general election by May 1997, said in an interview with the Daily Telegraph published Wednesday.

Chechens retreat from Shali

SERZHEN YURT, Russia (Agencies) — Chechen separatist forces retreated from their stronghold of Shali Wednesday after a massive assault by Russian tanks, planes and artillery.

"Most of us pulled out, it was untenable," said Ramdi Akmedov, a separatist fighter among those who fled the devastated town.

He said a few fighters remained in the town and were able to go in and out through a gap in the Russian lines.

"They pulled out. They decided it was useless," said Uvaz Natiyev, a doctor who also escaped hours before Russian tanks completed their encirclement of Shali.

Russian forces launched a huge assault on the rebel stronghold early Tuesday, blasting the town with helicopter gunships, tank and artillery, planes and ground-to-ground rockets.

At dawn Wednesday, tanks could be seen firing barrages of shells at Chechen defences east of the town, then pushing south, cutting the main escape route to the mountains.

There were also Chechen heavy weapons emplacements in the hills around the village.

There were unconfirmed reports in Serzhen Yurt that the other major town still held by Chechen separatists, Gudermes, had also been stormed.

Shali became the focus of Chechen resistance to Russian rule after the fall of Argun last week. Its centre was deserted and destroyed after weeks of Russian shelling and bombing. The only civilians left were elderly

people with nowhere to go and those who refused to leave their homes.

"On Wednesday, the Interior Ministry troops, after presenting an ultimatum to the leaders of bandit groups based in Gudermes, started to disarm them in the town itself," Interfax said, quoting the press centre of Moscow's forces in the rebel area.

Gudermes is Chechnya's second largest town, 45 kilometres east of the shattered capital Grozny. It and the town of Shali, which Interfax said Russian troops were also surrounding, are among the few remaining rebel bastions.

Russian forces, backed by aviation and tanks have been trying to crush the rebels' unilateral bid for independence since Dec. 11.

Moscow troops took the Chechen capital, Grozny, in February after weeks of fierce fighting which left most of the city in ruins and killed thousands of people, most of them civilians.

Russian troops have retrained since then from moving into Chechen strongholds in efforts to restrict their own losses.

But last week they took Argun, 15 kilometres east of Grozny, by shelling it heavily, encircling it and moving in.

The seizure of Argun was a clear boost to the Russians.

Once the Russian troops sweep the rebels from the plains of Chechnya, the conflict is likely to move to the mountains.

Interfax said six Russian servicemen had been killed on Tuesday in operations to tighten the noose around

Gudermes and 11 were wounded. It described rebel losses as heavy.

Russian Chief of Staff Mikhail Kolesnikov was quoted in a German newspaper earlier last week as saying 1,367 soldiers had been killed since the campaign to crush Chechnya's three-year bid for independence began on Dec. 11.

Russia's Human Rights Commission has said as many as 24,000 civilians were killed in Grozny alone.

On Tuesday, Anatoly Kulikov, commander of Russian troops in Chechnya, ruled out fresh peace talks with the fighters of separatist leader Dzhokhar Dudayev unless they give up their arms and surrendered. The rebels have dismissed such demands.

Mr. Kulikov, quoted by Interfax, also said Chechen fighters had lost most of their heavy guns, their command structure had been disrupted and their reserves were dwindling.

Istvan Gyarmati, special envoy of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe, said the fighting could spread to neighbouring regions such as Ingushetia and Dagestan.

"What we saw very clearly in Ingushetia...and certainly the same for Dagestan, was that the war could spill over to neighbouring republics (regions)," he said Tuesday in Budapest.

"I consider the danger of the war's expansion to be larger than during my previous trip one and a half months ago."

At least 30,000 Chechens fleeing a Russian advance

into the towns of Gudermes and Shali are expected to cross into neighbouring Dagestan in the next 10 days, the UNHCR refugee agency said Wednesday.

Spokesman Ron Redmond said about 10,000 mainly women, elderly people and children, had crossed the border in the past week, including 3,000 who arrived in Dagestan Tuesday.

"We think there are at least 30,000 on the move," Mr. Redmond said. "Those fleeing say the region is under continuous heavy shelling. The noise can be heard as far away as the border."

Mr. Redmond said there were now 87,000 Chechen displaced in Dagestan and resources were stretched to the limit. The UNHCR was planning to construct "tent communities" to house the new arrivals, but was frightened of the risk of cholera in what is a low-lying and damp area.

"Well over 90 per cent of them are with host families who are now running out of provisions. In some areas there are as many as 60 or 70 people living in a five-room house," he added.

In London, British Prime Minister John Major Wednesday condemned Russia's military campaign in Chechnya but said Britain stood by President Boris Yeltsin's reform efforts.

In a wide-ranging speech at a conference exploring Britain's changing global role, Mr. Major said support for Russia reforms in spite of setbacks such as Chechnya illustrated Britain's long-term approach to foreign policy.



Hutu victims of ethnic violence recovering at a hospital in Bujumbura. Most of the wounded reportedly have suffered knife wounds but a few were apparently shot. The Organisation of African Unity (OAU) is considering sending a mission to investigate the violence, which has left some 200 dead over the past week (AFP photo)

tion of African Unity (OAU) is considering sending a mission to investigate the violence, which has left some 200 dead over the past week (AFP photo)

Foreigners continue low-key evacuation of Burundi

BUJUMBURA (R) — More than 300 Westerners fled out of troubled Burundi's capital Bujumbura Wednesday in a low-key evacuation of foreigners from a land racked by ethnic violence.

The passengers, mainly from Belgium, left on the same Brussels-bound Sabena plane that earlier brought in U.N. Human Rights Commissioner Jose Ayala-Lasso for a two-day visit.

At least 200 Burundians were butched in battles between Hutus and Tutsis last Friday, prompting France, Belgium, Italy, Germany and the United States to advise their nationals to leave.

Some 200 mainly French residents of the central African state fled out of Burundi Tuesday on a special French flight.

Kathleen Krueger, the pregnant wife of U.S. Ambassa-

dor Robert Krueger, told reporters she was glad to be leaving while gunfire was distant.

"Problem is the unpredictability of the violence," she said. "So far U.S. citizens have not been targets of violence. That could change this afternoon or tomorrow. Those of us with children and spouses are being prudent. I think, in leaving."

Three Belgians, including a four-year-old girl, were shot dead in an ambush near the capital 10 days ago. Three were wounded in what was seen as a deliberate attack on foreigners.

The U.S. ambassador's wife said this had sent shock waves through the foreign community. At the airport, children leaving fathers waited and couples hugged and kissed in emotional farewell scenes.

"The U.S. embassy has decided, like the French, Belgians and Germans, to allow and indeed encourage dependents to go home for an Easter vacation during the time of trouble," Ambassador Krueger told reporters.

There had been no reduction of diplomatic staff.

Commissioner Ayala-Lasso earlier said he hoped his mission would help "establish a climate of confidence, of fraternity and of tolerance."

He refused to comment on the weekend violence when Hutu gangs went on an orgy of arson and shooting, driving tens of thousands of Hutus out of the city even though soldiers from the mainly Tutsi army were patrolling the streets.

The commissioner was set to meet President Sylvestre

Ntibantunganya. Prime Minister Antoine Nduwayo, military commanders, the U.N. and Organisation of African Unity (OAU).

Belgium said a diplomatic solution for Burundi's crisis should be found. France and the OAU said Tuesday military intervention was not the answer to the problems.

A Belgian Foreign Ministry spokesman said Wednesday Belgium sent 10 soldiers to Bujumbura last weekend to protect its embassy.

Mr. Ntibantunganya, a Hutu, is reportedly in favour of intervention by Mr. Nduwayo, strongly opposes this.

African foreign ministers meeting in Cairo agreed Tuesday to send an OAU ministerial delegation to Burundi in early April to study what could be done to end the violence.

Italians to vote in key TV referendums on June 11

ROME (R) — Italy will hold a politically charged referendum on June 11 that could strip media mogul Silvio Berlusconi of two of his three television networks.

The date for the vote on the issue and on a further 11 referendums, some of which could also hit Berlusconi's private Fininvest empire, was set by Prime Minister Lamberto Dini's cabinet Wednesday.

Mr. Berlusconi has campaigned for a snap general election since he resigned as prime minister last December, a strategy his opponents allege is dictated by fear of the referendums.

Under Italian law, the referendums can be headed off only if parliament pre-emptively changes existing laws or if the legislature is dissolved beforehand.

Mr. Berlusconi said Monday, the first anniversary of a general election victory he secured with a campaign blitz on his Fininvest channels, that he would press for a

dissolution of parliament if his centre-right Freedom Alliance coalition wins regional polls scheduled for April 23.

His goal of a June election has recently appeared increasingly remote. Close ally Gianfranco Fini of the hard-right National Alliance party acknowledged last week that October was now the likelier month for an early election.

The TV anti-trust referendum on June 11, a Sunday, will ask voters whether they want to repeal an article of the so-called Mammì Law in 1990 which sanctioned Mr. Berlusconi's ownership of three private channels — Canale 5, Rete Quattro and Italia Uno.

Victory would restrict ownership by private individuals to one television network, though the referendum's leftist sponsors have lately sounded less confident of success.

The outcome is bound to be a major factor in Italy's political climate, sharply

polarised between pro- and anti-Berlusconi camps.

"I want the referendums to go ahead. The company is another matter but I really do want them to proceed on a political level. And I'm certain I'm going to win," La Stampa newspaper Wednesday quoted Mr. Berlusconi as saying.

Three other referendum issues, if approved, would reduce advertising revenue at Fininvest, Europe's second-largest private media concern, and shake up public broadcasting.

One referendum seeks to privatise public broadcaster RAI, which also operates three national television channels.

The other two would limit publicity breaks during feature films to one; against the current three or four, and ban advertising agencies from working for more than two networks.

Advertising on Mr. Berlusconi's channels is currently

handled through the Publitalia Agency, which is also Fininvest-owned.

The Mammì Law, named after the telecommunications minister who drafted it, Oscar Mammì, effectively cemented the RAI-Fininvest duopoly in Italian television.

The two broadcasters between them claim some 90 per cent of Italy's TV audience and a similar slice of advertising.

Fininvest channels have bombarded viewers with anti-referendum propaganda since the Constitutional Court gave the issues the go ahead on Jan. 11.

A court this week ordered the networks to carry a clarification with the public so viewers would not be misled about the aim of the referendum. The channels plan an appeal.

Among other referendums, the most important seeks to abolish automatic deduction of union dues from workers' salaries.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published in English by the Jordan Press Foundation

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Regrettable developments

THE FLARE-UP of unrest in Yemen that led to the death of three Yemenis protesting against increases in oil prices on Wednesday was not totally unexpected. Regrettable as they are, such incidents are largely expected in many Third World countries which have to, sooner or later, introduce sweeping changes in their economic policies and outlook.

In Yemen particularly, the issue of oil prices has been a sore point for the government. Yemen is producing around 300,000 barrels of oil per day, but the main beneficiaries of the valuable resource of the country is the foreign companies which operate the oil fields. The unbelievably low oil prices for the consumer in Yemen were perhaps the only benefit that oil has brought to the Arabian Peninsula country, which was obviously lured into a binding lopsided contract if only because of its relative inexperience in dealing with production-sharing agreements and concessions.

That does not change the reality that Yemen, saddled with a foreign debt estimated at more than \$7 billion, has no choice but to take serious moves towards economic restructuring as Jordan was prompted to do in 1988/89. Indeed, it is a painful process, much more so in Yemen, where tribal affiliations determine one's fortunes.

The government of President Ali Abdullah Saleh is obviously trying what it could to bring about reforms in a calculated way, as one can judge from the economic programme that the government is slowly unveiling. But the implementation of the programme will not be as simple as that. The average Yemeni is used to state subsidies for every aspect of his or her existence and it is a tough uphill battle to convince most Yemenis that the elimination of the subsidies is part of an economic policy that will in the long run put the country — one of the world's poorest — on the right course towards economic recovery. Hopefully, the Sanaa government would be able to push forward in this direction, particularly now that the country is on the verge of closing a major gas deal.

The fact that Wednesday's violence and deaths took place in Aden, the former stronghold of the southern Yemeni leadership, is a nagging reminder of the volatility of the situation in the south of the country. It can be hardly said that the government forces, trying to control the unruly militias of political parties as well as religious extremist factions, are on top of the situation in the port city.

There are worries that elements of dissent who propagate anti-northern sentiments still exist in Aden and that they could exploit the rash of violence to launch a campaign that has nothing to do with the price hikes.

Wednesday's violence has unveiled a situation that, if not properly handled, could develop into a serious destabilising factor for Yemen, which can ill-afford to have another bout of strife.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

AL RAI Arabic daily said in its editorial Tuesday that the Jordanian people new find themselves facing an American stand that is worthy of appreciation after the U.S. pledged to honour its commitments to Jordan. The newspaper said the Jordanian people had a fear that the U.S. would not honour these commitments, and although this fear was unjustifiable, it was difficult for them to ignore it. The paper recalled President Bill Clinton's address to Parliament, in which he stressed that commitments made under the dome of parliament should always be carried out. It also said Vice-President Al Gore reiterated these commitments in Amman. Thus it seemed clear that His Majesty King Hussein's visit to the U.S. will be the right occasion for the American president, Congress leaders and representatives of the two main American parties to voice their determination to honour their commitment, the newspaper said. It added that the leadership of His Majesty, as expressed by American officials and congressmen, was a main reason for supporting the Kingdom. The newspaper voiced appreciation of the U.S. stand and support of Jordan and commended the leadership of King Hussein.

A COLUMNIST in Al Rai on Wednesday called on Israel to leave the decision on the issue of displaced Palestinians to the Palestine National Authority (PNA). Ahmad Al Misch said these Palestinians, who were displaced in the wake of the 1967 war, have a sacred right to return to their lands not only because this right was affirmed in the Jordanian-Israeli and the Palestinian-Israeli agreements, but also because of the right of the Palestinians to self-determination. He said Israel should not interfere in the internal affairs of the PNA, especially when this authority spreads its sovereignty over the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

The View from Academia

Students' expectations of teachers: conceptions and misconceptions

By Dr. Ahmad Y. Majdoubeh

GENERALLY, TEACHERS rarely pause to ponder seriously on what their students think of them. I know, of course, that teachers often pass out to students evaluation sheets of courses they teach and that some educational institutions routinely ask students to assess the performance of their instructors. But if these evaluation sheets and assessment reports do not result in real self-examination on part of teachers and a serious exchange of opinions with the students (and I am afraid they often do not), they are ultimately of little value.

I say self-examination on part of teachers and exchange of views with the students because students' perceptions of teachers and expectations of their performance and role are at once reliable and unreliable. They are reliable because students (whether at kindergarten or university level) are more intelligent and perceptive than many think. As fundamental partners in the teaching/learning enterprise, they (especially the more astute and serious) always have good observations, good feedback and good suggestions as to how teachers ought to conduct themselves and conduct business in class. After all, they are always there, looking and watching. The other day, I found out from my son who is first year at kindergarten, that he and his peers not only can tell you in precise, meticulous detail what their two teachers are like (as people and as instructors) but that they have very accurate perceptions of each other's parents, perceptions formed solely on the basis of their glimpse of them when they bring their kids to school in the morning and when they pick them up at the end of the school day. On the basis of this brief glimpse and the brief encounters in the hallways, they can tell you not only which parent is overweight or not, elegant or not, "spacey" or not, but also which one is friendly, kind, polite, etc. Much of what students know about teachers is amazing in how accurate it is.

But much can also be inaccurate and unreliable. This is especially true in relation to so much to the instructor's physical features and personal traits as to his/her philosophy, approach, style and performance. Students are generally subjective and inexperienced, and their conception or sense of philosophies, approaches, styles and performance may not therefore be as mature, profound and sophisticated as one would want. To think something is fitter or better because we "feel" or "believe" it is, or because it is "easier" or more "convenient" for us, is not solid enough ground for making drastic changes of teaching

habits and methods. Yes, there are many misconceptions in the minds of many students about what teachers are or ought to be like.

The other day, I was grading a writing exam. The students were asked to write about the "qualities" of a "good" teacher. Obviously, the subject was of great importance to students, and they had a lot to say about it. The interesting thing about the exam, among other things, was the frankness and truthfulness of students' answers (which is, by the way, what makes such exams more reliable in revealing learners' opinions of teachers than the evaluation sheets and assessment reports spoken of above), the reason being that students were not asked to write about any specific teacher; they were simply expressing their opinion of what they thought a good teacher was.

The suggestions they gave were infinite, but most agreed that teachers should be kind, understanding, loving, fun, serious, fair, qualified, firm, patient, courteous, creative and encouraging. Clearly, most of these we all know and agree upon. But some can be quite problematic. One can of course comment on each and every quality listed, each being important enough and complex enough to merit thorough examination.

However, I wish to confine myself here to raising one positive suggestion and one misconception.

Among the qualities that all students insisted upon emphatically were "being fun" and "being loving." In my opinion, students are right in expecting their teacher to be exciting, in both his approach and his personality. Ideally, students are expected and supposed to be motivated enough and enthusiastic enough to learn, especially in the advanced stages. Otherwise, why would they continue to want to pursue their studies? The teacher's job is, essentially, to communicate and convey the type of information and material students need to know and to help them acquire the various skills they need in the various fields and disciplines. In theory this is true, of course. In practice, however, it isn't. Even graduate students, people who have come to the university of their own choice and who have (presumably) chosen subjects they value and feel comfortable with, need to be excited. If you do not excite them and interest them (through the type of material you select, the approach you choose, the subtlety and depth of the points you make, and the witty comments and jokes you spontaneously bring into the issue under discussion), they lose interest and fall asleep. If this is the case with

graduate students (at the master's and Ph.D. levels), how about students at the undergraduate level, at school and kindergarten?

The fact that students, in the said exam, insisted so much on the matter shows just how important this quality is, a quality which many teachers either do not have or simply neglect. Successful teachers (I agree with students) have to be interesting, exciting, and fun — not simply knowledgeable and academically qualified.

As for the question of "love," I think this is a pure misconception on part of the students. In the exam graded, nearly 90 per cent of students asserted that "teacher should love his students and treat them like sisters and brothers," I disagree.

In the learning/teaching process, there is no "love" between students and teachers. If I were a student I would want my teacher to respect me, to listen to me when I wish to make a substantive point, to persuade me when I disagree, to explain to me when I am not clear about something, to tolerate me when I sound stupid, to shut me up politely when I ramble and say a lot of nonsense, to make some time for me outside the classroom, etc. But to love me?

Such misconception is widespread among our students, and it is a misconception they inherit from our culture at large. When our kids listen to the radio in the morning, when they watch TV, when they talk to their grandmothers, or at times (alas) when they go to school, they are told: People must love each other, the driver should love the pedestrian, the policeman should love the driver, the public servant should love the citizen, the construction worker should love the building owner, the tenant should love the landlord, etc., etc. I have actually heard a lot of nonsense like this over our radio and TV, in our newspapers, in interviews with our officials. The pedestrian does not want the driver to love him; he wants him to respect his right of way. I do not want the civil servant to love me; I want him to process my application with as little procrastination as possible.

The ultimate point to emphasise here is that there are a lot of good suggestions that serious students have to tell teachers about, and there are a lot of misconceptions that serious teachers have to debate with students. It is easy for a teacher to lecture and speak, but it is more difficult for him to listen to students or to debate matters with them. The teaching learning experience is a two-way street.

U.S. presidential race likely to highlight abortion

By Alan Elser
Reuter

WASHINGTON — It is the issue some Republican presidential candidates wish would go away.

But abortion is looming as a large feature of the 1996 presidential campaign, especially now that California Governor Pete Wilson seems likely to become a candidate.

Mr. Wilson, who last week established an exploratory committee as a preliminary to formally declaring his candidacy, is a longtime upholder of abortion rights.

His presence in the field will energise anti-abortion forces in the Republican Party, forcing other candidates to take a stronger

stand on an issue many would rather avoid.

"One should not downplay the importance of those voters in the Republican Party for whom abortion is the most important issue or even the only issue that counts," said Mark Rozell, a scholar of politics with Mary Washington College in Virginia.

They may account for 10-15 per cent of the Republican electorate but they are a much bigger proportion of the voting electorate because they always show up at the polls. That's significant, especially in a multi-candidate field," he said.

On the Democratic side, former Pennsylvania governor Robert Casey Friday also established an exploratory committee to challenge President Clinton.

Mr. Casey, who underwent a heart transplant less than two years ago, is a passionate opponent of abortion whose main motivation appears to be to embarrass Mr. Clinton on that issue.

But the anti-abortion wing of the Democratic Party is relatively small and lacks the clout and single-mindedness of its Republican counterpart.

Among Republicans, prior to Mr. Wilson's emergence as a possible candidate, Pennsylvania Senator Arlen Specter was the only defender of abortion rights in the race.

But Mr. Specter was seen as the longest of longshots for the nomination. That is not true of Mr. Wilson, who will be well funded if he runs and has the presumed

ability to carry his home state of California, the largest and richest in the land with the most electoral votes and the most delegates to the Republican nominating convention.

Even before Mr. Wilson became a factor, anti-abortion forces in the Republican Party were voicing unhappiness about the apparent unwillingness of leading candidates to highlight the abortion issue.

Ralph Reed, director of the powerful Christian Coalition, warned last month that his estimated one million members would not support any Republican nominee for president or vice president who did not oppose abortion.

A poll commissioned by Mr. Reed's organisation found that 71 per cent of

Republican voters opposed abortion.

Apart from Mr. Wilson and Mr. Specter, all the other candidates are officially anti-abortion. But "pro-life" activists are not impressed by what they view as the lack of commitment and fervor among the frontrunners on the abortion issue.

Senate Majority Leader Bob Dole, Texas Senator Phil Gramm and former Tennessee governor Lamar Alexander rarely speak about abortion, which they know is a divisive issue that could rebound against them in the country at large.

All three have refused to rule out nominating a backer of abortion rights to be their running mate and Mr. Dole has named several

such figures as possible vice presidential choices.

Many anti-abortion activists say they have written all three off and will back three far right candidates instead, all of whom are seen as outside shots for the nomination.

The three are conservative columnist Pat Buchanan, California Representative Robert Dornan and Maryland radio talk show host Alan Keyes. All are passionate Catholics who have made opposition to abortion the centrepiece of their campaigns.

Mr. Gramm has so alienated Christian Evangelical voters in his home state that several Texans are trying to pass a resolution to throw the party's support behind Mr. Keyes.

A split in Israel's cabinet on the drawing of a line

By Anthony Lewis

HOW DO members of the Israeli government feel about critical issues in the peace process? It depends which ones you ask. Ministers are extraordinarily divided — and open about their differences.

Take the question of "separation." A vague word here, it refers to the idea of physically separating Israelis and Palestinians, by borders and fences, to increase security. A committee appointed by Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin has recommended a plan costing upward of \$200 million.

The police minister, Moshe Shahal, strongly supported the proposal. The finance minister, Avraham Shohat, dismisses it. The health minister, Ephraim Sneh, who as a general was in command of the occupied West Bank, said: "Separation? It won't work."

Underlying that question and others is the problem of Jewish settlements, planted around the West Bank and now home to 130,000 people. How can you draw a line that separates them from Palestinians? How can Israeli occupation forces be redeployed before Palestinian elections, as the Oslo process requires, without exposing settlers to attack?

The problem would be easier if the Rabin government had moved quickly on it after the Oslo agreement in September 1993. There was talk of offering settlers compensation to move back to Israel, and of replacing

The problem of settle- settlers and offered comments in the West Bank pensionation to those who would have been easier to would move back to solve had the Israeli gov- Israel, estimates are that ernment acted on it right half the settlers would after the Oslo agreement. have left the West Bank Had Israel cut the econo- by now. mic incentives it gives to

the economic incentives to live in settlements with dis-incentives. If those steps had been taken, one observer estimated, half the settlers would be gone by now. But nothing was done.

The Rabin government is now officially committed to negotiating a redeployment plan that will let the elections for a Palestinian legislative council proceed. But some in the government are sceptical.

Yossi Beilin, the deputy foreign minister, wants to cut through the interim phase of Oslo and negotiate now on final borders between Israel and Palestinian territory.

Even if Palestinians had to give up some border areas to Israel and resettled that, he said, the resulting "separation" would effectively recognise their political status as an independent entity: Their deep desire.

Mr. Sneh sees no way to draw a single line between Israelis and Palestinians, now or in a permanent settlement.

He said in an interview that Palestinian elections should be held without a troop redeployment — "We're smart enough to stay away from the voting." And because no Israeli government could "uproot 130,000 people," he said, settlements would remain after a final agreement.

"The situation is difficult," Mr. Sneh said, "because Israel won't admit the inevitability" of Palestinian sovereignty and Palestinians won't admit the inevitability of Israelis living in the West Bank. On one tiny piece of land you have to have two sovereignties. The Palestinians will have to accept the existence of enclaves inside their sovereign territory. Living together. It sounds crazy, but there's no other way."

With all the differences, one common denominator seems to me to be emerging in the government: A new and highly important one. That is acceptance of the idea of a sovereign Palestine living alongside Israel.

Yossi Sarid, the dovish

environment minister, said out loud the other day that that would be the outcome of the Oslo process. Mr. Rabin, asked to comment, said his policy was still against a Palestinian state. But he sounded less firm than before.

Palestinians might say no to a state so tiny and cut up by settlements that it could not be viable. And the Israeli right remains totally opposed to the idea. The Likud leader, Benjamin Netanyahu, said a sovereign state in the West Bank "would be terrorist and become Islamic sooner or later."

For those reasons I think it is quite wrong to say, as many have said, "the peace process is irreversible." A Likud victory in next year's election would almost certainly reverse it.

But the possibility of peace has never seemed so tangible in this place, so beautiful and so riven by the intractability of human beings.

The New York Times.

LETTERS

It all begins with a smile

To the Editor:

HOW LONG shall man sleep? How long will he remain a flea? How long will he drink from the ponds of misery? How long will he soothe his pain and grief by the prosecution of others? I cry for the oppressed and ones who have been hurt, there are those of the dark who wish for you to give up the game, never, the battle has been on for quite a while, and the game plan for destruction is ever winding.

Let knowledge and compassion be your guides on the way, there is no need for selfishness, however, satisfy your soul by helping your brother and sister in need. Death has no significance. It is unimportant. When one's time has come there is no escaping it and thus do not live in fear of dying. Life itself is unimportant, but what is significant is what one accomplishes in life. What is important is what he has done for the betterment of his fellow brothers and sisters, what he has contributed in righteousness. Those who cloud themselves with wealth, money and material objects and who think of nothing but the acquisition of superficial impermanent beauties are asleep. Real beauty comes from ones devotion to love, truth and unselfishness. It all begins with a smile.

Hassem Ali
Amman.

Law must be enforced

To the Editor:

HEAR HEAR to you editorial entitled "Traffic-Ons Again" (Jordan Times, March, 27). Unless and until road safety laws are enforced sensibly, fairly, diligently and equally to all, the horrific road accident toll in Jordan will remain unacceptably high. The application of these laws should begin with those who represent the law and order in this country, such as the police themselves, government and military drivers who should be the first to set exemplary standards for all to follow.

Gina Anderson,
Amman.

The Jordan Times welcomes letters and contributions from its readers on any subject they wish to tackle. Letters intended for publication, however, should contain the writer's full name and preferably address as well. Names can be withheld only upon request and under special circumstances. Letters are subject to editing. The newspaper is not responsible for the return of unused manuscripts.



Weekender

March 30, 1995

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Published Every Thursday

SOCIETY ON THE MOVE

Waiting for the newsmakers

The lack of substantive home news was felt so strongly over the last week that even BBC Television called the JT to ask if we had any suggestions for stories. But, during the lull felt by the absence from the Kingdom of His Majesty King Hussein, His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan and Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker, more than hushed whispers could be caught about woes in the Cabinet. The Arabic daily Al Aswaq and the weekly Al Majd reported that a cabinet reshuffle was expected and, as a sidebar, that a minister (name withheld) was caught in a most compromising situation with a married-but-separated woman. More stimulated by the former report, the JT called one minister the morning both stories appeared asking "Have you seen Al Aswaq?" -- at which the minister shrieked jokingly, "It's not me!" When on to the more consequential matter of talk of polarisation in the Cabinet and the apparent conspicuous absence of Minister of State for Prime Ministry Affairs Ibrahim Izzedine from his office and Cabinet meetings, the junior minister said that he had not noticed any strong divisions of late. He admitted that when the Cabinet was first formed the situation was more individualistic -- ministers wary of each other and guarding their turf. But that had changed as Sharif Zeid recognised the circumstances and worked to encourage coordination and team effort, the minister said.

While Sharif Zeid has been out of the country accompanying King Hussein to France and the U.S., guarding the ship is Acting Prime Minister Abdul Raouf Rawabdeh. Asked to comment on reports of possible Cabinet changes, Mr. Rawabdeh said that such measures come under the authority of the Prime Minister and therefore comments would have to come from Sharif Zeid himself when he returns to Amman.

Mr. Izzedine, who told the JT that he had taken an official leave prior to the Prime Ministers' departure to France and until his return to Jordan, said "this is a coalition government, a parliamentary government, and therefore it is not unusual to have differing views." He added, "there are of course a few things to be discussed," when the prime minister returns. Mr. Izzedine pointed out however, that even with opposing views, some of which "are very far apart," business is conducted with "an element of respect" between people working together. Observers see the polarisation as the offspring of a coalition government formed to secure Parliament's vote of confidence. Some in the Cabinet camp, described as the discoveries of former Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali, have

outlived their usefulness to the government and will be weeded out, observers say. Meanwhile, everyone seems to be saying "Just you wait till the P.M. gets back."



Abdul Raouf Rawabdeh

'Normal' response: In Israel a writer to the Jerusalem Post took strong issue with Acting Prime Minister Abdul Raouf Rawabdeh, not as the acting caretaker of the government but as the custodian of Jordan's education system. The writer was, Alouph Hareven, the co-director of Sikkuy, the Association for the Advancement of Equal Opportunity, which, according to the Post, "facilitates the rectifying of civil inequality between Israel's Jewish and Arab citizens." Hareven starts his piece with a translation of only one quote he attributes to a "Abd al Rauf Al-Ruahala." The quote read: "Arab culture is more profound than Hebrew culture, which is empty and not comprehensive." The writer then lashed into a scathing diatribe, pointing out that the minister's limited knowledge of famous ancient as well as contemporary Hebrew works on religion, philosophy and various aspects of culture. Although the author, takes direct aim at Mr. Rawabdeh, whom he repeatedly refers to as "the august minister," his target is markedly more the lack of tolerance

among those on both sides who are finding "normalisation" a difficult concept to swallow.

'Yes it did, no it didn't': In diplomatic and press circles last week talk was brewing of an alleged incident involving a group of youth, said to be returnees from Kuwait, who followed Kuwaiti Charge d'Affaires in Jordan Faisal Mkhizem and his wife to Amman National Park and when they caught up with the couple the youth insulted and even cursed the diplomat. An Arab diplomat told a foreign news correspondent that the Kuwaiti envoy lodged a formal complaint and received an apology from the Minister of Foreign Affairs. International press sources stand by their information that the incident did indeed occur, but Foreign Ministry sources, in the absence from Jordan of Foreign Minister Abdul Karim Karbariti, deny it. Meanwhile, Mr. Mkhizem is not responding to calls and therefore is neither denying nor confirming the incident. Let's see if something or someone surfaces to set the record straight.

Iraq on their minds: A story off the Reuters wire Tuesday, originating from Washington, D.C., about the White House seeking an oil ban on Libya, was headlined "White House says U.S. seeks oil ban on Iraq." Catching the error, which some editors here interpreted as "the obsession with Iraq," the news agency ran an "urgent" correction only seconds later, changing Iraq to Libya.

Faith on canvas: While his wife is busy taking care of the children -- the underprivileged children of the area, including Jordan, Syria, Djibouti, the West Bank and Gaza Strip -- multi-artistic and quite accomplished stage and television director-painter Leo L. Rialp prepares for his first exhibit in the Middle East. Moving to Jordan a year and a half ago with his wife, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) Area Representative Victoria Rialp, the 40-something artist has painted 10 1.5 x 1.2 metre canvasses which he will put on display at the Instituto Cervantes beginning Saturday evening. But the exhibit was not the idea of this reserved and gentle man from the Philippines. His works were spotted by Her Royal Highness Princess Wijdan, Ali who was moved to encourage Rialp to share



Leo Rialp and his painting, Psalm 16

his "abstractions of the sacred" with the people of Jordan. "You can say that the roots of my paintings are in abstract expressionism, but I feel uneasy about that because there is always some amount of figuration in my works. There are too many symbols in them for them to be purely abstract," Rialp says of his art. He began exhibiting his work in Brasilia where he studied fine arts at the University of Brasilia, while his wife, affectionately known as Bubut, was appointed to UNICEF Brazil. In 1988 he brought "Portraits of the Filipina" home to Manila in a group show of Filipino masters and emerging artists at the University of the Philippines. A painting from his first one-man show, at the Ayala Museum in Manila in 1991, remains there on permanent exhibition. Towards the end of 1993 Rialp displayed what one art reviewer described as using "the modern idiom of pure painting to articulate human faith" at the Philippine Centre on New York's Fifth Avenue. Leo Rialp's works will be on display at the Instituto Cervantes from April 1 until April 15.

Jennifer Hamarneh

35 years later, memories of romance destroyed by KGB linger on

MOSCOW (AP) — Yeva Stroyeva smiled sadly as she read aloud from the 33-year-old letter.

Ms. Stroyeva met Colin Goodman in 1960, when he came to Armenia to help install some imported equipment at a local factory. Ms. Stroyeva, an engineer at the factory, began studying English with Mr. Goodman.

Soon their relationship grew more intimate. "We would go for walks in the woods," Ms. Stroyeva said, in an interview with Associated Press TV. "But then I noticed people were checking on us."

The young couple made no effort to hide their romance. In fact, Ms. Stroyeva immediately went to the local KGB, while Mr. Goodman went to the director of the factory where they both worked, to "confess their sins."

At first, officials let the relationship continue. But the KGB soon asked Ms. Stroyeva to report on Mr. Goodman and his British colleagues. "Once the local KGB officer asked me to plant documents marked 'top secret' in his room," to

top officer to tell her she could marry Mr. Goodman only if she agreed to work as a Soviet spy in England. "I said no," she sighed. "I couldn't live my whole life that way."

When Mr. Goodman's visa expired, the government refused to renew it. He returned to Britain. "I felt total emptiness," Ms. Stroyeva said. "Ev-

everything reminded me of him. The lovers wrote but only one of Mr. Goodman's letters made it past the Soviet censors. "I finally received this letter," Ms. Stroyeva said, carefully holding the 33-year-old document, "and I fell on the bed. I couldn't do anything. I looked out the window all day." That was the last she

Britons confront the kiss

By Ron Kampers
The Associated Press
LONDON — A kiss has become much more than just a kiss in Britain.

Along with the hug, it's the talk of the nation this week, dominating front pages, talk-radio and water-cooler chitchat.

The once simple forms of greeting stand accused of breaking down class distinctions, promoting sexual harassment and symbolising the influence of the French.

It all began Sunday, when Britain's Green Party introduced "politically correct hugging" at its annual conference.

"We're a touchy-feely party," where people hug each other, party spokesman David Taylor told the Associated Press. "But there's been a breakdown in standards in social codes of behaviour and people aren't sure how to approach each other."

The workshop resulted from female Greens' complaints of discomfort over being hugged by male colleagues who tended to touch more sensitive parts of the body," Mr. Taylor said.

Party executive member Miriam Kennet, who organised the workshop, worried that men in the small party would feel "lonely, confused and rejected" if turned down outright.

So she developed three politically correct hugs: Side by side (hands on shoulders); frontal (an object -- such as a clipboard -- acts as an appropriate barrier during the embrace, with hands on shoulders); and the warning from behind ("do you want a hug?" followed by -- you guessed it -- hands on shoulders.)

"A politically correct hug should be used to support each other after working hard," Ms. Kennet told participants. "If the hug is done correctly, it's the most incredible feeling."

Last week, Ms. Kennet, Mr. Taylor and others demonstrating the Green hug were splashed across the front pages of several national dailies.

"It's sure to cure the population explosion," smirked the Daily Express.

"When approaching such earnest folk, it is hard to know whether it is more risky to embrace their persons or their principles," editorialised the Daily Mail.

Mr. Taylor said he was dismayed by what he described as "prurient" coverage by Britain's mostly conservative press. "What came across to me is that they have the problem" with touching, he said.

They're not the only ones. On Tuesday, the London Times reported that a private school in Scotland, the Dollar Academy, banned kissing among its students.

Rector John Robertson, citing "spring in the air," warned senior girls and boys that they would be disciplined if they came within six inches of each other, the paper reported.

Also this week, the Liverpool Transport Authority decided to ban posters promoting the movie Disclosure, featuring Demi Moore embracing Michael Douglas. Motorists' groups complained that the clutch took drivers' eyes off the road.

Inevitably, the royals were dragged into the controversy. Prince Charles -- already chastised by the tabloids for supposedly kissing his sons' nanny earlier this year -- was caught on the front page

of the Daily Mail hugging an unidentified skier at a resort in Switzerland.

Times columnist Nigella Lawson complained that the influence of Britons' kissier French cousins, who customarily greet each other with kisses on the cheeks, meant that "everyone has bought into the myth that to be uptight and English and unaffectionate is a bad thing."

"The stiff upper lip is a thing of the past," she said. "Everyone is puckered up for the squishiest of embraces."

In fact, before the rigid mores of the Victorian age set in, Britons were notorious for their kissing.

It was the restoration playwright, William Congreve, who coined the phrase "kiss and tell." British warriors dying on the battlefield -- most famously, Lord Nelson -- would demand a final, mouth-to-mouth kiss from their fellows before passing into the next world.

"We need all the help we can get with such volatile and sensitive codes," the Times editorialised Tuesday. "In an increasingly classless world, there are no longer authorities... to lay down the codes."

Child poet's extraordinary talent creates sensation

By Michael Field
Agence France Presse

AUCKLAND — In Laura's world the moon is a silver hubcap on "God's unicycle... he rides up high" and her cat Blue "is a toe thief" who "sleeps in his clothes."

It was a rainbow. Which witch put sand in my sandwich? I stood under the bridge, then I understood. I sat on the ledge and thought about what I know. It was knowledge.

Laura Ranger is a 10-year-old publishing sensation here. In a country less than generous to poets, her book, Laura's Poems, has sold out its 3,000 copy first edition.

"There isn't a word out of place; there are deft and delicate hidden sound patterns; and -- above all -- the stanzas are in exactly the right order, perfectly paced," wrote Manhire.

Like another celebrated Wellington girl, Academy Award winner Anna Panquin, not a lot is known about Laura. Her parents keep her star under wraps, refusing to grant interviews or allow photographs (except on enigmatic one for the book's cover), preferring instead to honour the talent while keeping a normal Kiwi kid.

Laura is a child of the age and writes her poems on a computer. "What seems effortless in Laura's poems has been worked at -- and this must be partly responsible for the absence in her writing of those twin curses of children's poetry: clumsy rhymes and adjectival overload," Manhire says.

Those who know the Rangers say they are average people in a pretty normal household, except they have a child who stays up late, not to watch television, but to work on poems.

Her book has prompted serious discussion on radio here, reviewers hail her and adult literary figures are quick to identify her as a genuine talent.

When Laura was six, she had a poem published in the quarterly School Journal. In 1993, her "Two Word Poem" appeared in "100 New Zealand Poems", edited by Bill Manhire, a poet and reader in English at Victoria University, Wellington.

In an interview, Manhire said the book was selling out everywhere. "I think the fact that she is a child sparks the public interest, but there is no doubt that technically her poems stand on their own... She's a real poet."

Wellington's Dominion reviewer Simon Garrett says, "Laura Ranger, now 10, is most certainly a poet."

School Journal editor Brent Southgate wondered if she was real at first. "Though this sounds odd, it was too good to be the work of an adult. She has the clarity and freshness of a child and yet writes better than an adult."

Two Word Poem
The toad sat on a red stool
it was a toadstool.
The rain tied a bow
in the cloud's hair.

People

By Jean-Claude Elias

"Man is our most precious asset." It may sound strange to mention His Majesty's King Hussein's famous saying in this somewhat technical column, but it's not.

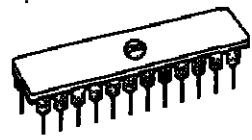
In the eighties, owning a Personal Computer (PC) was a matter of real pride for its owner. The simple fact of having a purchased the hardware (and sometimes the software too if the buyer is an honest person who never deals with pirated programmes — yes some people are like that) was an achievement in itself. Computers were relatively expensive and delivered only limited performance. Back then, a 40 or 80 MB (million bytes or characters) hard disk was reserved to the few who could afford it.

Now that the price of computer related products has reached unprecedented lows while the machines performance has soared to amazing highs, the relative value of a PC system has become negligible compared to the factors that interact in any computer set up.

It is difficult to estimate accurately the value of the work one does with a PC. This can tremendously vary from one person to another, from one company to another and from one job to another. It is however certain now that the value of a person's skills, added to the time this person spends operating a PC, using its software and producing results is far superior to the price of the machine, whatever the job, the company and whoever this person may be.

If the above is unquestionably true in countries where the "per capita income" is higher than Jordan, it is also true even in the Kingdom. An employee with a monthly salary of JD 400 may cost his

chip talk



employer as much JD 650, taking into consideration the additional social charges and the organisation's overheads. A good 486 PC can be purchased at JD 1200 in Jordan, that is a little less than two months of the employee's cost to the company. To think that some organisations still hesitate to make computers available to those who can make good use of them!

The recent awareness about the importance of ensuring proper computer training is but one more confirmation of the value of the human element. Hardware and software are nothing compared to the talent of the user, to his efforts at producing better results and to the precious time he spends operating the system. Employers should keep these points in mind when evaluating equipment purchase.

By keeping import duties and taxes on information technology very low (16 per cent currently) the government has implicitly recognised its importance and its contribution in reshaping our society. With such a progressive attitude, it may not be long before both the public and the private sectors put a PC on the desk of each employee who can use it or is willing to learn how to.

Moving arrows and the illusion of reality

By Samer Ghaleb Bagaceen

Architecture is inevitable in the sense that you can't get rid of it and you can't get away from it. Architecture isn't special buildings, it is all building. So architecture is almost everywhere. You can't, as with other arts, easily absent yourself from it. Leaving out mountains, caves and deserts, every interior and every exterior view puts some kind of architecture in your way. You can't be wholly indifferent, surely?

Maybe this is why I am finding it difficult to dodge the idea of architecture making our people better and whether European recipes of planning and design can be applied to the Jordanian.

But there is nothing to stop us from dreaming of a day when Amman goes European, when it develops a traffic-free, ecologically sustainable and a cafe-society centre. And when it becomes a city brimming with intelligent enterprise and cultural energy.

This sort of thing I am talking about came to me in a letter I received the other day from one of my student friends in Italy. She dedicated nearly half of the letter describing the carnivals that have been taking place in Milan and other cities all over Italy just recently.

These kind of events are now, as they have long been, very special to the people who celebrate them, young and old, men and women and both locals and tourists. I believe that this is so because these events are truly about people coming together and sharing the party spirit, in a kind of enchanted world, to use my friend's exact words. It was easy for me to imagine what she was talking about and describing as memories from some distant Notting Hill Carnivals

and my own student days in London came to my mind. Enough of that for it is time for a reality check. I have just finished reading my letter and I decide to go back to the article I was writing for my Spanish class, my first fully fledged Spanish piece of work, and to the exam questions I was preparing for my students before I started reading the letter.

Still, my imagination is still awake and I start to imagine Amman with its new parks, with its long lost river restored to life and its centre revived and overwhelmed with the vivid imagination of its artists, designers, musicians and performers.

All this is of course wonderful, but in dreams lovely things happen that waking life spikes. But this does not mean that we stop fighting. We are all right to fight, fight and fight again for the city we love and there can be no harm in us repeating what we are saying until something happens.

I have also recently received another letter from another Swedish friend who is doing a training period as a school teacher. She writes that she is very happy with what she is doing and says that she enjoys teaching the first graders because she finds them both honest and spontaneous. These are qualities, she says — and I totally agree — that we seem to lose the older we get. It is really sad that gravity is not the only thing we get used to as we are growing up for the world itself becomes a habit in no time at all. It seems as if in the process of growing up we lose the ability to wonder about the world. To children, the world and everything in it is new, something that gives rise to astonishment. It is not like that for adults as most accept the world as a matter of course.

Here's a thought. In the way we look at things, are we adults, or are we children who have not yet become world-weary?

ON THE LIGHTER SIDE

By Mohammad A. Shuqair

FASCINATING FACTS

★ An American firm produces a kind of wallet made of steel and plastic that could never be opened unless a four-number cipher is used. Strangely enough, the wallet would destroy itself if opened by force.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

★ "Akra" whales visit the Argentinian shores only for catching seals.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

★ It happened one day that two American politicians, who used to compete in the last century, for entering the Congress, met by accident.

FIRST: I never think of making a way for rogues.
SECOND: But I do!

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

★ In 1797 the Public Prosecution in Britain got the habit of chasing puppet theatre artists if they dare make their puppets talk!

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

★ The mud jumper can move on the ground and breathe by means of the skin of its tail.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

LET'S CHAT IN ARABIC

— No news is good news.
Nimal khabar alla yakoon honaka khabar.
— Every cask smells of the wine it contains.
Kollo enas bema fechi yandah.
— Every dog is a lion at home.
Kollo kalb fee haytehi assad.
— Everything comes to him who waits.
Man sabara dhafar.
— No one ever repented of having held his tongue.
Ma nadima man sakat.
— Circumstances alter cases.
Al-zuroof toghayyer al-ahwal.
— To forget a wrong is best revenge.
Al-tasamoh anil-isa'a khayrontiqam.
— Forbidden fruit is sweetest.
Kollo mamnu' mar'ghoob.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

TIME FOR FUN

★ A book had been published by a famous man of letters, but it has never met with aspired success. One day the author, over-hearing a critic depreciating his work of art, commented:
"My book is just like a mirror. If a 'donkey' had a look at it, he would never see the face of an angel."

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

★ WIFE TO A FRIEND: Finally I managed to prevent my husband from practising his bad habit of biting his nails.

FRIEND: Do you yourself trim his nails?

WIFE: No, but I've smashed his teeth.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

★ EMPLOYER: Yesterday you broke the coffee cups. Today you have broken the window glass. What will you do tomorrow?

LAZY SERVANT: Oh, I'll break nothing. It's my week-end, sir!

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

★ One night the electric current was cut off.

FATHER: The box of matches is just on your left hand, my son. Please give it to me.

SON: Good heavens! How could I differentiate the right from the left in the dark?

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

★ A young man failed to join the faculty of medicine. So he started reading books about this branch as general knowledge. Those books contain no detailed data or prescriptions about symptoms or complications of diseases. It occurred that he once had larynx inflammation. He, therefore, wrote himself a prescription and went out to one of the pharmacies to get the drug.

"How old is the diseased dog?" inquired the chemist after reading the young man's note.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

BANK OF KNOWLEDGE

Are you fond of cinema stars? If so, try to identify the following actresses from their nicknames:

1. The Champagne Blonde
2. America's Sweetheart
3. America's Sweetie
4. Steel Butterfly
5. Cinderella Girl
6. Blonde Bombshell/Platinum Bombshell

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

THE WORLD OF COOKING

SPINACH & PEPPER CASSEROLE

INGREDIENTS

225g spinach, washed, trimmed and roughly chopped.
1tbsp oil
½ red pepper, sliced
½ green pepper, sliced
2 sticks celery, trimmed and thinly sliced.
1 finely chopped onion
15g sultanas
½tbsp cornflour
15g cheddar cheese
1tbsp tomato puree
1tbsp fresh breadcrumbs
Pinch of paprika; pinch of sugar, salt; pinch of ground cinnamon

METHOD:

Cook the spinach, with only the water that clings to the leaves after washing, in a covered pan until just cooked. Drain the spinach well, reserving the cooking liquid. Heat the oil in a frying pan and saute the peppers, celery and onion for about 20 minutes. Mix together the sultanas, paprika, sugar, cinnamon, salt, tomato puree and cornflour. Reduce cooking liquid to 75 ml and add to the mixture. Add to the vegetables and cook, stirring until the sauce thickens. Pile into a casserole dish. Mix together the cheese and breadcrumbs and sprinkle over the vegetables. Place under a hot grill until the cheese melts.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

PUZZLES

MISSING LETTERS: If you insert the same letter 21 times in the following formidable-looking collection of letters, you will be able to read a sentence, which, though neither witty nor wise, makes tolerable sense:

AEREDARSIEREDASENOS
ROEDOUOESHEASEOFSAL

Conditions, distance make it tough for doctors in Antarctica

By Peter James Spielmann

McMURDO STATION, Antarctica — The utter isolation of Antarctic bases during the long winter sometimes forces tough choices on doctors — such as the Russian physician who decided to remove his own appendix.

Russia's Vostok Station, up on the Polar Plateau at the geomagnetic pole, is completely cut off from the outside world from February to November by gales and drifting snow that closes the runways. About five years ago, the only doctor at the base came down with appendicitis. He had to turn his scalpel on himself, using local anesthetic.

He survived, and has become part of Antarctic medical lore among doctors who spend the winter at the bottom of the world — along with the Australian diesel mechanic who helped save a man's life. In the early 1960s, a worker at an Australian station suffered a head injury in an accident, and the mechanic was called in to fashion a piece of fuel

line into a large catheter, which the base doctor used to drain a brain hemorrhage.

Again, the patient survived.

Antarctic doctors are proud of their skills, but they hope they are never tested in a situation as dire as that.

There has never been a winter medical evacuation from the U.S. base at the South Pole, and there have been only two from McMurdo, which is 2,500 miles (4,025 kilometres) and a nine-hour flight from a major hospital. Even in summer, planes that land at the South Pole keep the engines running so they do not freeze up.

The U.S. programme has been fairly lucky not to face any disasters, or to have to improvise emergency care. Its worst casualty last year was a heavy machine-shop worker at McMurdo who had his jaw shattered when a hydraulic press buckled.

"Those teeth were floating around," said Dr. Randall Hyer. The man's jaw was wired and he was flown to Christchurch,

New Zealand.

The U.S. Antarctic programme stresses prevention to minimise problems. Everyone who works on "the ice" has been thoroughly screened to guarantee they do not have any lurking medical problems.

That includes pregnancy, which disqualifies a woman from working in the U.S. programme, or gets her a flight out if her condition is diagnosed in Antarctica. The U.S. programme does not attempt to deliver babies — or perform abortions.

"I receive a lot of criticism, but I can shrug it off. I can sleep at night," said the chief physician at McMurdo, Dr. Joe Swartz.

As part of the diagnostic screening, everyone at the U.S. bases is also part of the "walking blood bank." They are required to donate blood for a transfusion if their type is needed. So all must be free of hepatitis, the AIDS virus and other infectious diseases.

Staffers who winter-over are subjected to yet another hurdle, a psycho-

logical test and screening for antisocial and behavioural problems and alcohol abuse.

"You don't have enough personal space, you don't have enough varieties of personalities" at the South Pole station, said Dr. Eileen Sverdrup, the base's only doctor this winter. "It is definitely not the sort of place to run from problems."

Those who have been screened say the U.S. Navy psychologist or psychiatrist in charge also asks whether a person has any elderly or ill relatives who might die while the staffer is isolated over the winter, and how they feel about that possibility.

But no screening programme is foolproof. A distraught support staff worker came in on the first relief flight this spring intent on committing suicide in Antarctica and had to be put under observation.

Officials and doctors at McMurdo and the South Pole declined to talk about the incident, which was common knowledge at both bases. The worker was evacuated on the next flight out.

Craftsmen set up hospital for damaged artworks

By Lysiane Beaumel
Agence France Presse

BORDEAUX, France — Works of art damaged in an accident or suffering from the ravages of old age now have their own hospital, where an association of skilled workers restores them to their former glory.

The International Centre for Art Craftsmen (CIAA) only opened here a few weeks ago, but already it has as much business as it can handle, from worn-out Aubusson tapestries to a frayed 17th-century book binding or a faded painting.

Hossein Aminian, an Iranian who has lived in Bordeaux for 15 years, has set up more than a dozen specialists in restoring pictures, glass and ceramic ware, clocks, tapestries

and furniture who are among the top of their profession in France.

Their Workshop is in a 500 square metre (5,000 square foot) former warehouse in The Chartrons, an area housing many antique dealers. Open seven days a week, the entrance has been magnificently fitted out in oriental style, with light-coloured stone walls, tapestries on the walls and a fountain in blue mosaics.

The CIAA is open seven days a week, and while some work full time others only come in for a couple of days. But the important thing is that they all work together, exchanging ideas and information in a convivial atmosphere.

"We have been open a month or so and already the demand is enormous,"

said Aminian, a restorer of carpets and tapestries who won a gold medal in the annual "best worker in France" competition in 1991.

"Before, people did not know where to go. Now they call us from all over France and a transport company brings us their objects," he said.

Aminian denies running a "craft supermarket," saying those recruited to the CIAA are carefully selected both for their skill and their professional integrity, and are obliged to respect a charter of quality.

Veronique Debord, a specialist in gilding and lacquer, was working on the wooden frame of an old mirror, which the owner wanted restored but not so that it would clash with the well-worn

glass. It required careful removal of the old gilt and treatment of the wood before application of a new coat, some 40 hours of work all told.

"We complement each other here," she said. "We exchange tips, which can only have a positive effect."

New members are steadily being recruited to the association. "A leading cabinet-maker will join us soon as well as a stringed-instrument maker who is just finishing his studies," Aminian said.

The next step is to set up facilities for training and apprenticeship. "I could give work to 10 carpet restorers tomorrow but there aren't that many," Aminian said. "These skills are disappearing."

JTV PROGRAMME NOT RECEIVED

A century ago, pictures came to life on big screen

By Christopher Burns

PARIS — The grainy picture sits frozen on the screen for several seconds like a family photo in grandma's picture book. Then it springs to life with workers exiting a factory, a child being fed, a man trying to jump on a horse.

Big deal? Not 100 years ago.

The year 1895 saw the birth of cinema, with a much-debated history of who among all the inventors feverishly working on both sides of the Atlantic can claim to have created the medium.

The Lumiere Brothers of France — Louis and Auguste — are widely considered the leading pioneers, having filed their patent Feb. 13, 1895. They made the first public screening of a movie to a handful of businessmen on March 22, followed by a commercial screening on Dec. 28.

However, the Americans beat the French to the first paid showing of a film: The Latham Brothers opened a theatre on May 20, 1895 at 156 Broadway in New York

City, showing boxing matches. Their contraption was called an Eidoloscope. (Major Woodville Latham is credited with developing the Latham Loop, which threads film through cameras).

Thomas Edison's Kinetoscope, developed years earlier, could record, but not project moving images, and was limited to peep shows in which individual viewers looked into a little box. Edison applied for his patent in 1891.

The Lumieres crafted the cinematographe in 1894. This fused other inventions, including Edison's and the motion picture camera experiments of Etienne-Jules Marey, and projected movies onto a screen for viewing by several people at the same time.

Of all the events leading up to what we now know as movie-going, it is the Lumieres' first public screening that has gained the most attention over the years. It happened on a chilly December night in the basement of Le Grand Cafe at 14 Boulevard Des Capucines, steps away

from the Cafe De La Pair, the Jockey Club and the Opera.

It was an anticlimactic and ironic moment in history, seeming more like a curiosity than the beginning of an industry that would dwarf the majestic Opera and run many of the city's thriving theatres and cabarets out of business.

Down the cafe's rickety staircase to the Salon Indien, a former billiard room looking something like a large opium den, were about 100 seats facing a screen 9 feet (3 metres) long and 6 feet (2 metres) high.

Outside, a hawk tried to entice customers through the sidewalk door, on which a banner read:

Cinematographe Lumiere

Entrance One Franc

"They were people strolling on the boulevard, and it was rather expensive, one franc for a quarter of an hour show," Vincent Pinel, a film historian, said in an interview.

"At the time, people were seeing a technical curiosity. It was great to



An undated picture of the Lumiere brothers (AFP photo)

see a moving image. But they couldn't suppose that such an invention would lead to such a powerful industry.

"That was completely inconceivable," said Pinel, author of *The Century Of Cinema* and *Louis*

Lumiere, inventor, filmmaker.

It was the best place the Lumieres could find in the area, where grand boulevards built during the Haussmann urbanisation era had become a centre of nightlife and cafe soci-

ety. The owner of the large cafe, whose upstairs is now a bank and a travel agency, didn't believe the Lumieres would draw a crowd, and demanded a flat 30 francs a night — about the price of a theatre ticket — instead of the 20-per cent cut the Lumieres offered.

The first night, the owner was right. It was flop, and the big newspapers couldn't be bothered, thinking it just another "magic lantern" diversion for the kids.

Thirty-three people showed up, paying 1 franc each to see the 20-minute presentation of 10 films less than 2 minutes long. On opening night, Louis and Auguste Lumiere stayed behind in Lyon. Their father, Antoine, ran the show.

Often with a sense of slapstick, the movies show workers scurrying out of the Lumiere Film Plant in Lyon, a child trying to pluck a fish from a bowl, a child stepping on a gardener's hose, a man repeatedly jumping on and falling off a horse, and swimmers jumping into

the ocean. Newspapers were in disagreement over how the audience reacted, one saying people clapped and cheered, while another made no mention at all.

Two days later the newspaper *La Poste* ran a review excitedly noting how the film "perpetuates the image of movement" and raised the subject of immortality.

Once the public can use the cameras, they can film "people dear to them, no longer in immobile form but moving, in their action, their familiar gestures, with words on their lips, death will cease to be absolute."

Within three weeks, the excitement grew to the point the Lumieres were drawing up to 2,500 people a night with several screenings in the room, now partitioned into two blue-and-gray ultramodern banquet halls.

The craze grew quickly over the next few years, Pinel said.

"It exploded in the sense that it was shown all over France. But it wasn't an immense success. It was shown at fairs, like

X-Rays or beard women, cinema was li that, reserved for a modest audience.

"You'll have to wait more than 10 years, as you start seeing artists' films."

Still, it's Edison who is credited with inventing film itself.

"The Americans consider themselves the inventors of film and they're right. And the French consider themselves the inventors of the cinema, and they're right," Pinel said.

The Hotel Scribe plans a multi-channel video presentation to commemorate the centenary. It is created by American artist Judith Barry.

"Because of the crisis today, we're getting a lot of criticism," said Guillaume Piens, spokesman for the hotel, referring to French film's gradual loss of market share to Hollywood.

"But the American artists have been the strongest in the medium," he said.

The exhibit is to run from Dec. 15 to Jan. 15, 1996.

France celebrates film's 100th birthday — with declining market

By Christopher Burns

PARIS — France is celebrating the 100th birthday of cinema by remembering the glory years when the French created and dominated the silver screen.

But clouding the party atmosphere is news that France keeps losing market share to Hollywood.

Despite extensive government efforts to support the film industry, 1994 box-office figures indicate French movies slid below 30 per cent of receipts on home turf for the first time in decades.

There's plenty of blame to go around. Some in the industry point to a public seduced by American action flicks. Others blame a subsidy system that encourages production of lower-quality TV movies or complain that too much is spent on a few heavy historical epics.

There is agreement, however, that government support is needed to avoid going the way of other European countries whose

home-grown films often capture less than 10 per cent of their markets.

Compared to the rest of Europe, France's movie industry is relatively vibrant. The percentage of home-grown films in many countries is in the single digits.

Despite subsidies, German-produced films have captured less than 10 per cent of movie revenue at home. As in other countries, Disney's *The Lion King* led with 7.5 million viewers.

The Spanish government annually spends about \$22.7 million on subsidies. The country's films accounted for only 8.8 per cent of box-office receipts, compared to 75.7 per cent by American films, according to the European Audiovisual Observatory.

Italian films hold about 25 per cent of the domestic market.

"When Italian film was in its glory, we had great directors like Fellini, Pasolini, De Sica, Visconti, and we didn't have TV

invading our lives nowadays," lamented Paolo Boccio, head of the Film Art Production Company in Rome.

"There must be several kinds of restaurants, not just fast food, but Italian, French, et cetera," said Pascal Rogard, head of the Union of French Film Producers and Exporters.

Evoking better days, French TV broadcasts and movie shorts recall Hotel Du Nord, *The Grand Illusion*, *The Children Of Paradise*, the Brigitte Bardot romps and the new wave era. Museums show how the Lumiere brothers screened the first celluloid feature film to the public on Dec. 28, 1895, surpassing the coin-operated peep show Kinetoscope of Thomas Edison.

At the Pompidou Museum, photos and displays show how the French film industry dominated world production until World War I, when the business was pressed into the war effort and never fully recovered.

By 1921, France's share of its own market fell to 15 per cent.

Ironically, French film enjoyed a resurgence during World War II when American movies were banned under the German occupation. By the 1970s, France's share of its own market hovered just below 50 per cent, and slid under 35 per cent in the late '80s.

Two films released to mark the 100 birthday look wistfully back. A long-lost colour version of Jacques Tati's 1947 film, *Jour De Fete* — seen only in black and white until now — shows the comic genius of the late director. Agnes Varda's 1981 *Nights* has Michel Piccoli playing Mr. Cinema, whose biggest hero is Orson Welles, and who is visited by numerous aging French stars.

But most French moviegoers in recent weeks were flocking to see *Frankenstein*, *Terminal Velocity* and *Bullets Over Broadway*. Last year, the three leading films in France were *The Lion*

King, *Four Weddings And A Funeral* and *Mrs. Doubtfire*.

To stave off the erosion of its movie industry, French film annually gets about \$415 million in aid, \$70 million directly from the state and the rest from show business taxes, according to the National Cinematography Centre. The taxes include 11 per cent on all movie tickets, 4 per cent on TV station receipts, 2 per cent on recorded videocassettes and 1.5 per cent on TV sales.

France also requires that TV programming be at least 40 per cent French and 60 per cent European, going beyond the European Union policy of 51 per cent European programming.

So why the drop in market share?

Younger moviegoers "want cinema that's in your face, cinema that's pure amusement. It's a kind of film that requires a lot of money," said Rogard. "A U.S. film can easily cost \$30 million, and a French film is about

\$4.8 million. ... You're not boxing in the same division."

"They tell us, 'have ideas, festive, intellectual, symbolic ideas,'" director Bertrand Tavernier said in an interview with *Le Monde*. "But each time we have one, everyone's plunged into consternation, because it takes money, or because it requires unusual organisation."

Investment, meanwhile, has concentrated on bigger productions, often historical epics such as the 19th-century mining saga *Germin*, France's most expensive film to date, or last year's Queen Margot, about an anti-Protestant massacre in the 16th century.

Queen Margot was "too complex to be a popular success," said Jean-Michel Frodon, a critic for *Le Monde*.

"It's a very Franco-French formula that can interest only audiences in Europe and the east coast," Frodon said. "We haven't found on a regular

basis a king of cinema that seduces a large audience."

Frodon said another "new wave" of the kind that produced *Breathless* by Jean-Luc Godard or *Hiroshima Mon Amour* by Alain Resnais would do little to save French film.

"They didn't do very well at the box office. It works well in the cultural ghetto," he said.

French film could better reflect daily life, he said. "Today very few filmmakers want to do contemporary cinema. There are some exceptions like Claude Lelouch and Luc Besson," he said.

Besson's *The Professional*, an action-packed story of a hit man who befriends a girl orphaned by drug thugs, was doing well in the United States after becoming a leading box-office hit in France last year.

The film rivals American competitors in violence, is shot in New York, spoken in English and has Gary Oldman playing the lead villain.

In what was seen as another wake-up call to French filmmakers, the Cannes Film Festival last year named *Pulp Fiction* as its best film.

Rogard and others argue the government is not doing enough to promote French film.

Public TV, which should fund higher quality films, lacks the funding and relies on commercials to make ends meet, Rogard said.

"Public channels should be mainly financed by taxes. The government should have the courage to do that."

Independent filmmakers are seeking to persuade theatres throughout France to show their work as an alternative to big Hollywood productions and not select movies based only by how well they do in Paris.

"We're not finding an audience because the public is not finding our films," said Henri Herre, a board member of the Independent Cinema Distribution Agency.

A century of cinema: talkies, colour and now computer images

By Robert Koch

WASHINGTON — A century after cinema was born nearly simultaneously in Europe and America, movie-making has undergone revolutions with talkies, colour and the big screen. Now the new revolution is computer images.

"The computer will soon be as important to filmmakers as the camera," said Robert Zemeckis, a pioneer in

computer-generated imagery that was as big a star as Tom Hanks in *Forrest Gump*, which received 13 Academy Awards nominations.

In *Forrest Gump*, the main character was inserted into historical footage to show him, for example, interacting with President Lyndon Johnson.

"While creating digital images from abstract elements, freed from physical referents, computer imag-

ery has the potential to show us moving what we cannot even dream," said Reuben Gilmore, a cinema historian in New York.

The first revolution in movies came with the advent of the talkies.

The first to use sound was Don Juan, made in 1926 by Alan Crosland. But the real landmark came the next year with *The Jazz Singer*, in which Al Jolson made the famous remark: "You ain't heard nothin' yet."

In 1928, Hollywood's five big studios — MGM, Universal, Paramount, First National and Producers' Distributing Corp. — began using a new technology from Western Electric that put the motion picture and sound track together.

"This new technology created a new genre, very much American, the musical," says Gilmore. Two years earlier, in 1926, another revolution was in the making.

Inventor Herbert Kalman convinced Director Albert Parker to use "Technicolour," a process invented in 1917 to put two colours on the screen.

Parker used the system for *The Black Pirate* with Douglas Fairbanks. In 1935, Kalman added a third colour and Rouben Mamoulian used the improved system to make *Becky Sharp*.

And in 1939, Victor Fleming used it to make *Gone With The Wind*, a

gorgeous film even by modern standards.

Facing competition from television, a media that was at the same time similar and radically different from the movies, film reinvented itself in the 1950s by introducing the big screen.

In 1962, Henry Hathaway, John Ford and George Marshall made *How The West Was Won* using a system of synchronised projectors invented in the 1930s by Fred Wal-

ter, the director of Paramount's Special Effects Department.

Introduced in 1939 in New York under the name Vitarama, it had been adapted during World War II for use in teaching shooting. The system became widespread in Hollywood before being replaced by a similar competitor, Cinemascope.

"The system, using space and colour, was ultimately going to produce super-productions like

The Ten Commandments, a trademark of Hollywood until now," says Gilmore.

Ventures into three-dimensional — or 3-D movies — have thus far proved unsatisfactory. About 200 3-D movies have been made, all with little success.

Holographic images delivered via a laser appeared in the 1960s and may some day be developed to add depth to movies, but that day has not yet appeared.

Star Trek: Voyager launches journey back to basics

By Robert Jablon

The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Forget Cardassians, network execs and other bad guys. The fans of *Star Trek's* earlier incarnations are the real threat to *Star Trek: Voyager*.

The fourth live-action series debuted in January as flag-waver for the new United Paramount Network. Bets are it will live longer than a thrill.

But only if it avoids annoying those who, in the course of 30 years, saved the *Star Trek* universe from oblivion, made it a virtual modern myth, and get rabid if the cosmic

laws are broken.

One fan even turned off the premiere episode because it didn't start with the phrase "to boldly go..." so much for bold innovation.

"The fans are always in our mind... They keep us on our toes," says Rick Berman, who is executive producer of *Voyager* along with Michael Pillar and Jeri Taylor.

"We have a whole *Star Trek* technology," Berman says. "It's all made up, but to the fans it's as real as the rules of science."

Voyager is the third TV offspring of the original 1966 series, not counting a

long-ago cartoon show.

Filler calls it "back to basics." Where the recently ended *Star Trek: The Next Generation* had a cushy behemoth of a ship that seated 1,000 and the current *Deep Space Nine* has a space station with a holographic brothel, *Voyager* returns to the small-boat-in-a-big-ocean theme.

The Intrepid-class starship has a paltry crew of 200 that finds itself snatched deep into uncharted space. The mission: to boldly go — home. Which will take 75 years unless *Voyager* can find a mysterious alien to help.

The idea was to keep the show fresh by creating "a new universe, away from starfleet and away from the Federation," Berman says.

Voyager sets are built on the same Paramount sound stages as those for the defunct *Next Generation*, among the most popular syndicated shows ever.

The main bridge is all steel and ribbed panelling. It's a machine age, no-nonsense look.

A dedication plaque lists the late *Star Trek* creator Gene Roddenberry as chief of staff.

Majel Roddenberry, his widow, praises the new

series for its glossy special effects — easily affordable on a budget of more than \$1.5 million per episode — and its female main character, Capt. Kathryn Janeway.

In the original *Star Trek* series pilot, Ms. Roddenberry was second in command of the *Enterprise*. NBC rejected the character because it felt audiences would balk at a female in charge.

Now, there's Janeway. "Oh, am I happy," Ms. Roddenberry says. "The only thing that bothers me is it took 30 years to do it. Which means that Gene, once again, was... before

his time."

Actually, *Star Trek: Voyager*, like its ancestors, reflects current society more than future prospects.

The *Star Trek* of the 1960s put women officers in miniskirts as the freedom-loving Federation fought a cold war against the evil empire of Klingons.

Voyager's world is morally complex. The crew includes the Maquis, a rebel group founded after a Federation treaty ceded their colony worlds to the Cardassians. (Read Israel's West Bank and you get the picture).

The captain, played by

Kate Mulgrew, is a raspy-voiced supernom of the '90s transplanted to the stars.

Here she is, dealing with renegades, a nasty alien, a warp core breach and a bad hair day all at once (her flowing red locks may become as much a trademark as Jean-Luc Picard's bald pate or James Kirk's sideburns).

She's no powder puff. When Janeway wants a command executed, she snaps "do it" instead of using Picard's courtly "make it so."

Mulgrew says her character is tough but also compassionate, warm

and, well, feminine. She also has a fierce curiosity.

"We are lost in space. We may never see home again," she says. "But I think in myself and my deepest being, there's a quickening of the pulse and I'm thinking, 'oh boy, the planets I'm going to explore... the stones I will overturn.'"

Will trekkies take to this new show?

Majel Roddenberry says yes. "We can keep going forever," she says. "As long as we keep the prime directive, as long as we keep the original vision going, the legacy continues."

New approach challenges use of clot-busters for heart attacks

By Daniel Q. Haney
The Associated Press
NEW ORLEANS — A new debate over how to treat heart attacks is

applied to one of the world's largest gatherings of cardiologists. The issue at the meeting of the American College of Cardiology is the better way to quickly get rid of blood clots that cause heart attacks. Disintegrating clots with clot-dissolving drugs like TPA? Or pushing them aside with tiny balloons?

At stake are lives and money.

During the past decade, clot-busting drugs have

emerged as the front-line treatment for heart attacks, used on 180,000 Americans at a cost of \$350 million annually. If given soon enough, they can break up blockages in the heart's arteries, preventing permanent damage or death.

But now an approach called primary angioplasty is challenging the dominance of these drugs.

Angioplasty is already a mainstay of heart therapy. It is used on about 420,000 Americans each year to relieve chest pain in patients, nearly all of whom were not having heart attacks. Doctors thread a catheter into clogged

heart arteries and briefly inflate a tiny balloon that squeezes open the blockage to restore blood flow.

In its new application, some doctors are performing angioplasty as an emergency procedure within an hour or two after the heart attack patient arrives at the emergency room.

The latest findings presented at the cardiology meeting, attended by about 25,000 people, suggest that primary angioplasty is better, safer and cheaper than clot-busters.

"The data are overwhelming that it is a superior strategy," said Dr. William P. O'Neill of Wil-

liam Beaumont Hospital in Royal Oak, Michigan. He described primary angioplasty as a breakthrough that has "changed the natural history of this disease."

Sometimes, angioplasty is used as a backup if the clot-busters fail, but not the other way around, because angioplasty succeeds more than 90 per cent of the time.

Dr. O'Neill's latest findings, based on 1,099 patients at 32 hospitals in five countries, found that half of run-of-the-mill heart attack patients fall into a low-risk category that does amazingly well with angioplasty.

Their death rate is an astonishingly low four-tenths of 1 per cent. And they can safely be sent home from the hospital just three days after their attacks. Rather than staying the standard week or more while receiving clot-busters. This could mean substantial savings, even with the cost of angioplasty, which runs between \$15,000 and \$20,000.

Patients are considered at high risk when they are over 70 or have several diseased arteries or weakly beating hearts. They, too, do impressively well with angioplasty, with a death rate was just under

4 per cent. By contrast, about 6 per cent of patients die after getting clot-dissolving drugs. About 3 per cent suffer strokes when the treatment accidentally triggers bleeding in the brain. Angioplasty does not carry this risk.

"This has profound implications for clinical practice," said Dr. Jeffrey Isner of Tufts University in Boston. "It should be regarded as good news. It suggests the opportunity of a very aggressive approach getting people out of the hospital after a heart attack."

However, those who have spent much of their

careers on clot-dissolving drugs are skeptical, at best.

"Some of these investigators have been overstating the case based on small numbers of patients," said Dr. Eric Topol of the Cleveland Clinic, who helped pioneer the use of clot-dissolving drugs.

Only about 3,000 patients have been formally studied in reviews of primary angioplasty, compared with 150,000 in experiments with clot-busters.

Furthermore, the latest mortality figures reported with angioplasty seem perhaps too good to be true.

"They are acting like patients are almost made immortal by this," Dr. Topol said.

Clot-dissolving drugs require only a simple injection that can be given in any emergency room. However, only about 20 per cent of U.S. hospitals are set up for angioplasties. Performing them requires assembling a team of a cardiologist, nurse and technicians.

Dr. Douglas Weaver of the University of Washington questioned whether ordinary physicians, unlike specialists who are adept at emergency angioplasties, can perform them safely.

3 drugs found effective against AIDS infection

BOSTON (Agencies) — Two new studies on the AIDS virus have found three drug treatments effective in preventing AIDS-related pneumonia, and a fourth drug that helps prevent several fungal infections found in people with the deadly disease.

In the first study, published in the New England Journal of Medicine, researchers discovered that three drug regimens seemed to be equally effective in warding off pneumocystis pneumonia (PCP), a hallmark of AIDS.

Researchers, led by Dr. Samuel Bozzette of the University of California at San Diego, administered to three separate groups the drugs dapsone, aerosolized pentamidine or a combination of trimethoprim and sulfamethoxazole.

All of the volunteers for the study, who totalled 842, suffered from advanced AIDS and were taking the anti-AIDS drug AZT.

Only one per cent of the patients enrolled in the study died of the pneumonia, even though it is one of the most common infections and a major cause of

death among AIDS patients.

"The study shows that preventative PCP treatment — no matter what form you take — works quite effectively," Dr. William Powderly, director of Washington University's AIDS Clinical Trials Unit and co-author of the study wrote. "This reinforces the need to try and identify patients with HIV so they can benefit from preventive treatment."

The drug Pentamidine, however, was found less effective than the other two treatments when it was given to patients whose immune systems had become crippled by AIDS.

Trimethoprim, Sulfamethoxazole and Dapsone are made by several manufacturers. Pentamidine, manufactured by Lypomed Inc., is sold under the brand names Nebupent, Pentacarinat and Pneumopent.

In the second study, a research team led by Dr. Powderly looked at the ability of two drugs — Fluconazole and Clotrimazole lozenges — to prevent the fungus infections also common in AIDS patients.

In general, the Fluconazole treatments, which were particularly beneficial for patients with low immune cell counts, were found three times more effective than the Clotrimazole lozenges.

The study of 428 AIDS patients is the first large-scale look at the ability of Fluconazole, sold under the brand name Diflucan by Pfizer Inc., in preventing fungal infections.

Clotrimazole lozenges are sold as Mycelex Troches by the Miles Inc. pharmaceutical division.

The downside of Fluconazole is that researchers are beginning to see patients develop fungal infections resistant to the drug, and it is expensive, costing \$15 to \$20 a day.

Fluconazole also does not affect the overall survival rate because AIDS so extensively damages the body's immune system that patients are susceptible to a number of other complications.

Meanwhile, in Chicago a U.S. researcher cautioned that women who practice self-insemination with sperm that hasn't been properly screened for HIV run the risk of contracting the AIDS virus.

Another researcher said there have been no reported cases of HIV infection through artificial insemination since 1986, and the chances of a woman contracting the virus if they go through a doctor or clinic is "probably remote."

While all of the sperm banks questioned in a 1987 survey reported they screened donors for the AIDS virus, fewer than half the doctors practicing artificial insemination said they did, Dr. Mary E. Guinan reported in the latest edition of the Journal of the American Medical Association.

A year later the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommended that semen donors be screened for the AIDS virus, but it is unknown how many actually are.

And with an unknown number of women using such devices as Turkey basters to inseminate themselves with sperm from donors who were improperly screened, the door is left open for HIV infection, Dr. Guinan said.

"Artificial insemination is safe but not com-

pletely so," wrote Dr. Guinan of the CDC's HIV-AIDS Office.

Dr. Maria Rosario G. Araneta, lead researcher of a separate article in the same journal edition, said chances of a woman being infected were probably remote.

Dr. Araneta's study

found that seven of 199 women artificially inseminated with semen from HIV-infected donors between 1983 and 1985 later tested positive for the virus. Thirty-one others known to have received infected semen refused testing or could not be located.

The HIV antibody test became available in May 1985, and no U.S. cases of infection through artificial insemination have been discovered since then, said Dr. Araneta, an epidemiologist with the Naval Research Centre in San Diego.

Each year, about 75,000

American women are artificially inseminated with sperm from anonymous donors, Dr. Araneta said.

The problem, Dr. Guinan said, is with the unknown number who practice self-insemination, using sperm from improperly screened donors.

Researchers find experimental ulcer vaccine in laboratory mice

By Paul Reccer
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A vaccine can protect against the germ that is thought to cause stomach ulcers and some stomach cancers, Italian researchers have shown in a laboratory experiment with mice.

The study, published Friday in the journal Science, showed that more than 70 per cent of immunized mice were protected against a strain of Helicobacter pylori, the ulcer-causing bacteria.

"The finding suggests that vaccines against H. pylori are feasible and provides the rationale to proceed with human clinical trials," the Italian researchers report.

Marta Marchetti of the Immunobiological Research Institute Siena, in Siena, Italy, was the first author of the study. Her

co-authors included four other scientists from her research institute and one from the University of Siena.

Scientists discovered in 1983 that infection by the bacteria H. pylori was associated with gastric ulcers. More recently, the bacteria also has been linked to stomach cancers.

Infection by H. pylori can occur early in life and persist for a lifetime. Spread of the bacteria is related to fecal-oral contact.

About 80 per cent of the population is infected by age 20 in undeveloped countries and about half of the population is infected by age 60 in developed countries.

To conduct the experiment, the scientists said they first developed a strain of the Helicobacter pylori, or H. pylori, bacteria that would infect the gut of mice.

A laboratory research strain of H. pylori does not thrive in mice, but the Italian scientists found they could infect mice using strains of the bacteria taken from human clinical specimens.

The study reported that all mice tested became infected with the bacteria within eight weeks of oral inoculation.

Bacteria isolated from these mice were then introduced into a new batch of mice and one H. pylori strain, called Type 1, caused gastric damage similar to that which is seen in humans.

Twenty-seven mice were inoculated using two types of antigens produced by the immune systems of mice in response to H. pylori, Type 1. Fourteen other mice were used as controls and received saline inoculations only, and 14 others received toxin from a com-

mon digestive bacteria, E. coli.

All of the mice were then exposed to H. pylori Type 1.

After 35 days, all of the mice that received saline were infected with the bacteria. Only 7 per cent of those receiving E. coli toxin did not become infected. But among the mice inoculated with the H. pylori antigens, 78 per cent to 84 per cent were protected against the ulcer-causing bacteria.

"The effectiveness of our vaccination model has been confirmed in 13 separate experiments involving more than 300 mice," said the authors. "In all, 79 per cent of vaccinated mice were protected, whereas all control mice were infected."

Science, which published the study, is the journal of the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

Child AIDS victims in Romania face prejudice

By Roxana Dascalu
Reuters

BUTIMANU, Romania — Five-year-old Sorina Preda is dying of AIDS, ostracized by neighbors in her village near Bucharest.

In the northeast city of Iasi, Iasmina Calinciuc, six, and her mother are suing the local hospital and the Ministry of Health in a landmark case.

Romania has more than half the juvenile AIDS cases in Europe and more than 2,800 of them — 90 per cent of its total AIDS patients — are children under 12, infected in grimy hospitals through inadequate sterilisation and contaminated blood.

In Butimaniu, frightened villagers have ostracised Sorina and her mother Geta, who is HIV-positive — a carrier of the virus which causes acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS).

"I'm a nobody now. I used to earn some money working on people's land, or helping them at autumn harvest. Now nobody wants to hire me," said Geta, who looks far older than her 25 years.

Parents are sending me word they don't want their children at the same school with Andrea, my eldest daughter. She is not sick, but children keep calling her SIDA (Romanian for AIDS)."

The Preda's ordeal

started last year when doctors told the mother of three that she was HIV-positive and that her daughter Sorina had AIDS — apparently from separate sources.

Geta believes she was infected during one of her five abortions and that Sorina contracted the disease when she had a blood transfusion in hospital.

"Last Christmas, my children went to church for Holy Communion and a girl refused to take bread and wine from the same spoon that Sorina used, saying she would get AIDS," said Geta, standing in the dust and litter of the yard outside her crumbling stucco home.

The Preda family — mother, unemployed father and their three small children — survive on a state child allowance worth 19,000 lei (around \$10) a month.

Peasants want the children to stay away from the village kindergarten, school and church. Geta says even her local priest is reluctant to come to her home.

The Predas rely on the Romanian AIDS Charity ARAS, whose volunteers drove to Butimaniu on a sunny Saturday to bring cakes and presents for Sorina's fifth birthday.

On the same day, peasants were walking through the village carrying cakes and gifts of food for the dead to fellow

villagers, according to Orthodox Christian rites. They avoided the Preda's house on the dirt road almost at the very edge of the village where gypsy families live.

Watching from a safe distance, an elderly neighbour spoke of Geta Preda in the past tense.

"It's a pity what happened to her. She was a good woman. Only God knows what this illness is. I don't know what it is, but I'm not afraid. It's in God's hands," he said.

At the other end of the country in Iasi, 25-year-old Violeta Calinciuc is

locked in a court battle against the hospital and the Health Ministry. ARAS is helping her get legal assistance.

Mr. Calinciuc says Iasmina, her only daughter, was infected in Iasi hospital in 1992.

He is Romania's first AIDS court case and lawyers hope it will set a precedent for other child AIDS victims.

Such a case would have been unprecedented under the Communists when challenges to the government apparatus were all but impossible and mention of AIDS was taboo.

ANSWERS

BANK OF KNOWLEDGE

1. ADELE JERGENS
2. MARY PICKFORD
3. NANCY CARROL
4. LORETTA YOUNG
5. LINDA DARNELL
6. JEAN HARLOW

PUZZLES

MISSING LETTERS

TATTERED TARS TITTERED AS
TEN TOTS TROTTED OUT TO TEST
THE TASTE OF SALT.

WEEKEND CROSSWORD

GOLDBRICK
By Dorothy B. Martin

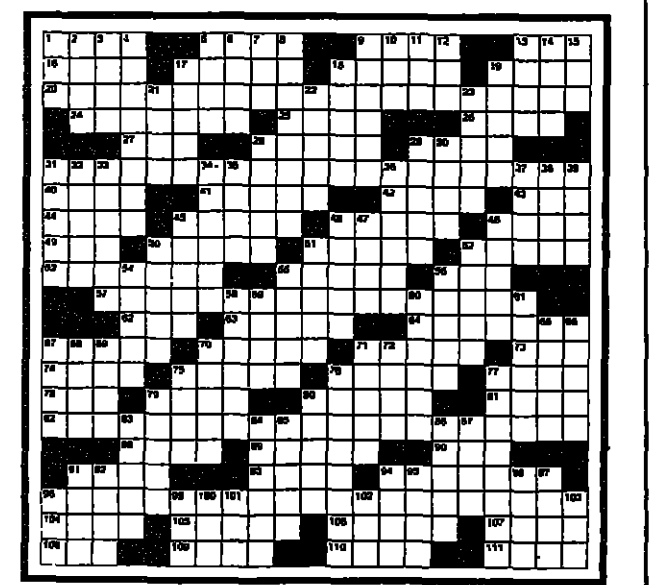
ACROSS

1. Spacious French
2. Name
3. Having morning
4. Referring to the
5. Star corps
6. Period of note
7. Camp
8. Period of note
9. Camp
10. These who
11. Upon the wings
12. Horrible!
13. In India
14. In India
15. In India
16. In India
17. In India

20. Behind the
21. Chicago's support
22. Suburban area
23. Name
24. Weather word
25. Lits — units
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31. Car
32. Car
33. Car
34. Car
35. Car
36. Car

37. More of virtue
38. Distant signal
39. Almost antique
40. Former Chicago
41. Resident
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71. Kind of bread



Diagramless 19 x 19
By James Barrick

ACROSS

1. Spot on a card
2. Relative of an
3. Period of note
4. Singsong or
5. Singsong or
6. Singsong or
7. Singsong or
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10. Singsong or
11. Singsong or
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18. Drench
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66. Drench
67. Drench
68. Drench

1. Coming into desert, motorist checks gas gauge and is thankful he has a tankful.
2. Leading costumer for featherweight crown signs up for bout with a has-been pugilist.
3. Before prefrontal lobotomy, old son says, "I'd prefer a bottle in front of me."
4. Should you use few yews when planning foundation plantings?

CRYPTOGRAMS

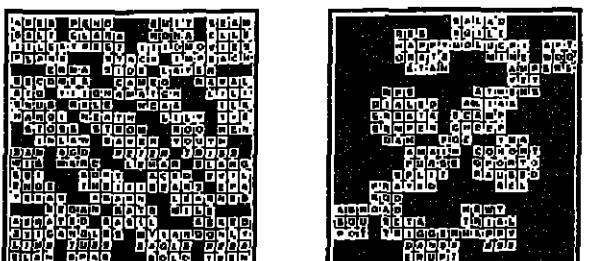
1. ATZ YUMR WHRZ, UTY RIZ WHO OVERHAT
DADDY IIM RAD WERRAT! — By Barbara J. Ruzic

2. SWT MU VT FAXONVENDOR XNZIO YU AX,
PAR SWER Z PAT ZH RWO FRUID VENDOR
YUOF MUSH? — By Ed Huddleston

3. ZINC "TV" OD ENCSOUCYV, TINKODE
SIOCRD TERYKOF, IOD VEV DNND DSUTED
ECV PUCVD, PFS IOD DUC RCZUD OS'D
KFDOT! — By K.C. Doyle

4. ZMRIPNMEA MONEYGANG ELKAP GYL
OANAYTA SCHIP SOLD TARGCOA NMRKMGZ
SYUD. — By Frank N. State

SOLUTIONS OF LAST WEEK'S PUZZLE



India's Congress Party at war with itself

By Paul Iredale
Reuters

NEW DELHI — India's ruling Congress Party is at war with itself over a run of provincial poll defeats, giving the Hindu nationalist opposition growing credibility as an alternative in general elections due within 14 months.

Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao, who only last month expelled former cabinet minister and party number two Arjun Singh from Congress, is facing a barrage of vocal criticism from a growing band of party dissidents.

With Congress now ruling in only three of India's dozen most populous states, and having added losses in the industrialising west to 1994 electoral reverses in the south, ever more party activists are asking whether Mr. Rao is capable of turning the tide.

The Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) meanwhile is beginning to believe it is in position to win the next elections and take over the government in New Delhi for the first time.

After sweeping to power in the western state of Gujarat and, in coalition with the local Shiv Sena, storming the neighbouring Congress bastion of Maharashtra, the BJP is gearing up to present itself as a credible national alternative to Congress.

At a four-day national executive meeting next week, it is expected to commit itself to continuing Mr. Rao's wide-ranging economic reform programme that has opened up the economy, while seeking a greater role for Indian entrepreneurs in the changes.

At the same time it is

likely to minimise the militant Hindu elements of its back-ground, which cost it dearly at the polls after the destruction of the Ayodhya mosque in 1992 by Hindus set off a communal blood-bath that killed up to 3,000 people.

Mr. Rao is also planning a series of Congress Party meetings during the next few weeks to draw up the battle lines for general elections he must call by June 1996.

There are growing signs that Mr. Rao, who is 73, may be planning a purge of some of his more outspoken critics in the run-up to the Congress Party convention due around the end of April.

Word is out that attendance at a March 30 rally organised by dissidents will be grounds for party disciplinary action.

This seems aimed at reining in Narain Dutt Tiwari, a former finance and foreign minister who is increasingly critical of Mr. Rao, sharing a growing number of speaking platforms with Mr. Arjun Singh and resigning from Congress's top decision-making body.

But the party has to tread carefully with Mr. Tiwari, the former Congress leader of Uttar Pradesh who still commands widespread support among party activists in India's largest state.

Mr. Rao also seems incapable of isolating Mr. Singh, expelled from Congress for mounting a campaign against him in which he accused the prime minister of being soft on corruption in the party and of ignoring minorities such as Muslims and the lower castes which have been the party's traditional supporters.

By Robert H. Reid
The Associated Press

MANILA — A foreigner is hanged in Singapore, and back home cries of tyranny and "police state" arise from enraged countrymen. A cultural clash between Asia and the West? This time, the anger comes from the Asian Philippines.

Massive public outrage erupted after the March 17 hanging of Filipino maid Flor Contemplacion. She was convicted of murdering a fellow Filipino maid and a 4-year-old Singaporean boy.

Millions believe Ms. Contemplacion, who was buried Sunday in her hometown of San Pablo city, was framed. They are bitter that Singapore refused requests from a fellow Asian government to reexamine the case.

The controversy underscores vast differences between Filipinos and other East Asians, who have outstripped this country economically during the past 20 years.

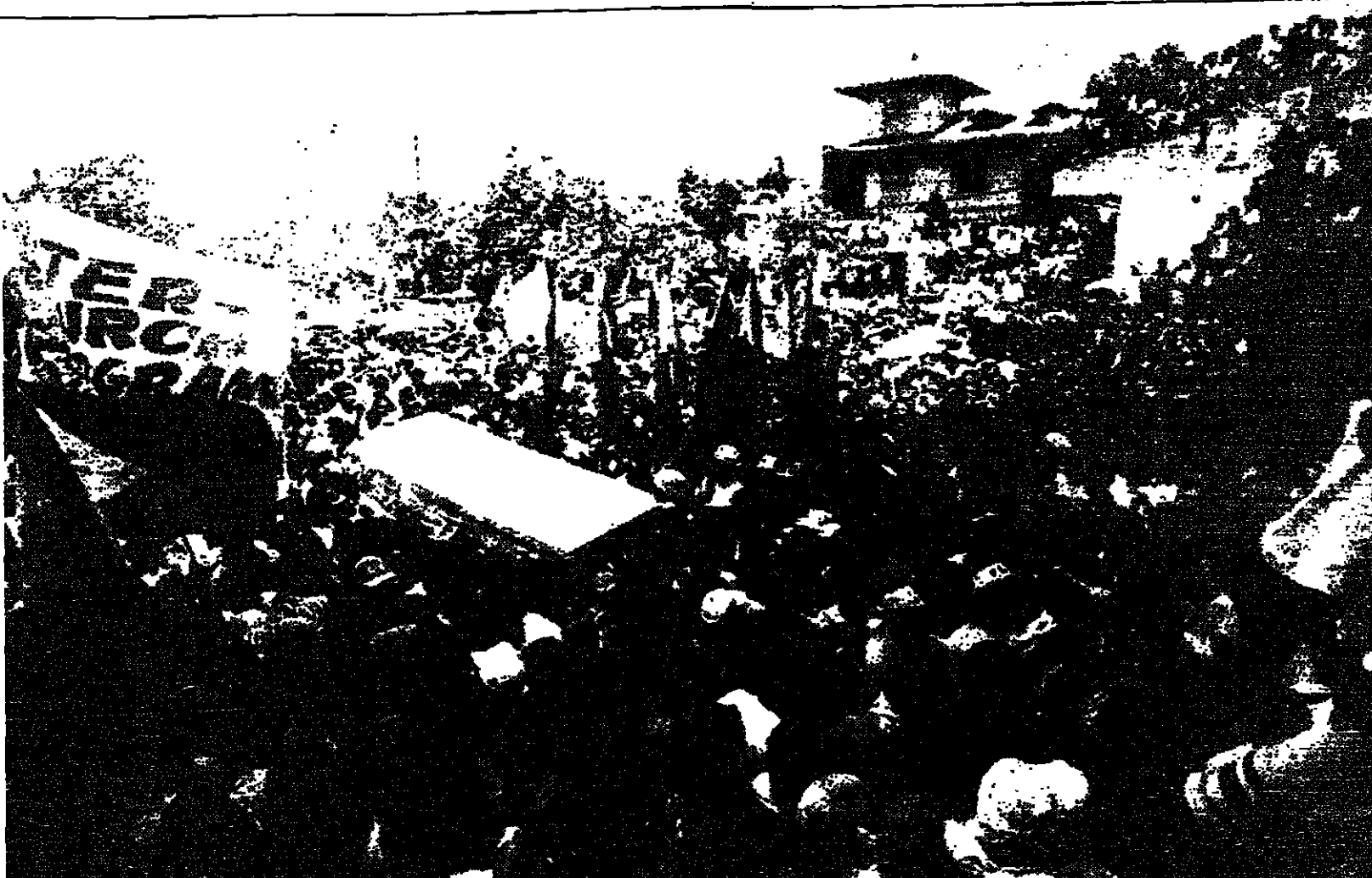
It has reinforced stereotypes Singaporeans and Filipinos hold about one another. Singaporeans generally have little knowledge or respect for the Philippines, perceiving it as a disorderly, crime-ridden place filled with irrational and emotional people.

"It is frightening that in the name of compassion, they forgo being rational," said Singaporean Ivan Chong, 40, who owns an advertising agency in Singapore.

Filipinos believe Singaporeans place greater value on rules than human life. "I think that if only Singapore had agreed to temporarily postpone the execution to hear new evidence, I would not be as angry," Filipino Janitor Willie Teves, 37, said.

"If there was a new hearing and she still was found guilty, then there would be nothing more we could do but accept the decision."

Much of the mutual bitterness stems from national pride. Poverty has forced an estimated 2 million Filipinos to work abroad, many as maids and labourers, in prosperous neighbouring countries. This has given Filipinos an unsavoury reputation as a nation of maids.



Filipino maid Flor Contemplacion's coffin is carried to church amid a surging crowd March 26 Prior to her burial (AFP photo)

Culture, tradition, history set Philippines apart in Asia

pinos to work abroad, many as maids and labourers, in prosperous neighbouring countries. This has given Filipinos an unsavoury reputation as a nation of maids.

"The domestics do the menial jobs, so sometimes they face something close to class 'discrimination,'" Jun Tellez of the Mission for Filipino Migrant Workers in Hong Kong said. "The tendency of the upper classes is to look down on the lower class and see all the negatives."

Back home, Filipinos are keenly aware of such prejudices. National pride encouraged them to rally around a perceived victim of injustice.

"We all feel guilty that this is happening," former government spokesman Teodoro Benigno said. "We feel even guiltier... that for our economy to keep afloat, our women have to live bestial lives abroad."

Differences in perspective were sharpened by the fact that Philippine culture, tradition and history make this archipelagic nation an anomaly in East Asia.

Much of the region was profoundly influenced by confucian values of respect for authority, community and social order. By contrast, the Philippines is Asia's only predominately Roman Catholic country.

As America's only Asian colony, Philippine political traditions are more in tune with Western ideals of individual rights, free press, division of powers and limited government than with the more disciplined and authoritarian nations of East Asia.

"The Contemplacion case brings out in sharp relief the enormous cultural divide between Filipinos and Singaporeans," the Manila Times said in an editorial. "For Singaporeans, rules are rules and God help you if you manage to break them. For Filipinos, everything is infinitely negotiable."

That was even true after the late president Ferdinand Marcos attempted to install authoritarian rule in 1972. Numerous opposition groups, from communists to the landed elite, flourished until a popular uprising toppled Mr. Marcos in 1986 and installed Corazon Aquino as president.

Conditions here remain far from ideal. Millions live in abject poverty. Human rights abuses and injustices persist, especially in rural areas. Nevertheless, the Philippines has the most liberal political system in Southeast Asia.

Philippine life has long been marked by a free-wheeling, undisciplined quality. There was no tradition of strong, central government until the Spanish subjugated the islands in the 16th century and imposed Catholicism.

Those free-wheeling tendencies were reinforced by the Americans, who ruled here from 1898 until independence in 1946. American concepts of separation of powers, free speech and limited government became part of Philippine political tradition.

"The Filipinos Westernised culture does not agree with the people here," said Catherine Lim, a Singaporean author often at odds with the government. "Culturally, they are distant from us."

Censorship: how the other half lies

Governments can justifiably suppress information to save lives, but not to save face, says

Alan Clark

CENSORSHIP IS one of those terms like "fascist" or "politically correct" that have slid downwards into the pool of all-purpose pejoratives, whose deployment can often indicate little more than generalised distaste, or hostility.

I regard it as meaning the denial or interdiction of information by decree (usually by Order in Council, occasionally by Statute) when applied by government. The term can be stretched to include deliberate omission or distortion of "news" by private or corporate pressure, or the threat of civil damages, but I would like to look at censorship by government.

In my view this is justifiable in two categories only, and they should be drawn as narrowly as possible.

First, the vexatious heading of "national security". Most people would accept that technical security information — the operational charts of ocean-going submarines; codes and cyphers; key sequences in electronic counter-measure, for example — are properly kept secret. And in the intelligence field the authorities have a duty to protect as best they can

the lives (and thus usually the identities) of their agents.

The second area in which a measure of censorship by government is legitimate (but where, I am sorry to say, it is often abused) is that classified as "commercial confidentiality". Plainly, where an investor with prior knowledge could make a fast profit — ministerial procurement contracts, referrals to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission — the authorities have an equitable duty to avoid premature disclosure.

There are three other categories where governments do practise, or at least attempt to apply, censorship. In my view they do so quite wrongly and often under the pretence that one or both of the two "primary" considerations apply. These are administrative convenience, public

reputation of ministers or officials, and personal embarrassment.

Most MPs are slack and incompetent, if not actually venal, in their operation of the procedure for parliamentary questions. They draft usually on the basis of getting a headline that will, if noticed by their constituents, indicate "activity". Some table, or get their researchers to draft, hundreds. Some occasionally perk up a bit and take (extra) money for so doing.

Very few MPs — Tam Dalyell is the most effective and persistent, but Nicholas Budgen and Richard Shepherd are also "dangerous" — have mastered the technique of repeated interrogation: how to use last week's ministerial answer as the building block for next week's question. But if you have worked in a minister's outer office you will know the flap that precedes

"First for Questions." There is an apprehension not just that the minister will fluff his answer, but that something might be given away that will lead to more work; establishment, or erosion, of "precedent"; even a reproachful note from his permanent (or, still worse, the cabinet) secretary. All because of this one critical pitfall: a minister must not lie to the House of Commons. If he does, he's out. The same day.

As a result, every Question Time is a potential bout of arm-wrestling between the established order and those who have the capability, though it seems very seldom the inclination, to discover the truth. I always found it strange that MPs did so little to press their advantage here. I never saw officials actually repress information, although sometimes they would with-

hold it (passim Sir Robin Butler, "Truth can be no more than half the picture"). But here no reform is needed, except to the intelligence and tenacity of those who are entitled to put the questions.

The fourth category, which as a historian I have always found particularly irritating (and which, of course, often overlaps with that of administrative convenience), is the protection of reputations. As we know, this can be extended from the reputation of a deceased functionary into a general susceptibility to the feelings of relatives, and even surviving offspring.

The arguments are well-rehearsed. They are deployed to justify the 30-year rule, which is too often extended to 50 years, sometimes even to the total excision and destruction of documents. Freedom of discussion and the quality of

official advice would be inhibited if the participants thought that their fallibility might, with hindsight, be prematurely (sic) revealed.

This is completely bogus. The public are not allowed to know the truth about Cabinet discussion of peace terms with Hitler; or the contents of Rudolf Hess's brief which he brought on his mission in 1941; or the wartime antics and financial speculations of the Duke of Windsor; or the full degree of pressure applied by the Americans to sterling over Suez; or the text of the consultations during the Cuban missile crisis. None of this has anything to do with personal reputations. It is far more a kind of general "not-in-the-public-interest" factor.

You might ask, why not? To which the only possible answers are (a) "because not"; and (b) "because it might lower the esteem in

which you held your elders and betters". Unbelievably, (b) is also deployed as a serious argument to justify the suppression of reports (only disreputable reports, of course) concerning the "private lives" of politicians and it sometimes seems, even the more prominent alumni of café society.

These are people who spend a large part of their own time writing personal press releases, searching for photo opportunities, paying agencies to contrive or fabricate favourable "publicity". On what possible basis can they claim that they should enjoy some kind of immunity from comment if the technique goes wrong?

The last category, where I believe the arguments are more finely balanced, but which I approach with diffidence as I have strong feelings about it but no exper-

tise, is pornography. I dislike the material intensely. Some of the ancient disagreeable intellectual experiences that I have had to endure as an MP involved the display of suspiciously "lifelike" videos seized by the police (which they were subsequently forced by the courts to release) showing appalling violence and sexual abuse against children and women.

Common sense tells me that these films are an encouragement to commit crimes of a particularly cruel and degrading kind, and that both their manufacture and their distribution should be visited by heavy penalties.

But at the same time I recognise that many of the general convictions that I hold in rejecting most other forms of censorship may make this standpoint difficult to sustain in logic.

This article is reprinted from *The Independent*, which took it from the new issue of *Index on Censorship*, published on Monday, which examines the state of free speech in Britain today.

King stresses Mideast role

(Continued from page 1)

"very responsive" on the issue.

President Bill Clinton had proposed spending \$275 million to write off Jordan's debt to the U.S. government, a request that was slashed to \$50 million by the House of Representatives. But the Senate approved a complete debt cancellation and lawmakers will negotiate a compromise.

Mr. Christopher, hosting a lunch for King Hussein, praised the Senate move,

calling it "an indication of a growing understanding on Capitol Hill of the importance of responding to the courageous action taken by the government of Jordan."

The King said: "We are aware of the fact that this subject is being looked at by all our friends here in a very positive way and we are quite satisfied that the results, God willing, will be positive."

King Hussein met President Clinton on Monday.

Workshop tackles tourism

(Continued from page 12)

Petra region that would include the Petra reserve and run by a council headed by the minister of tourism and antiquities. The council will be entrusted with developing the Petra Region and drawing up plans and policies that would promote the region as a tourist area.

The council was given vast authorities to control the process of urbanisation and con-

struction in the region. The council's authorities will include designing and establishing road projects, parks, licensing artesian wells and other public facilities.

It will also be responsible for developing the tourism sector and protecting archaeological sites and the environment in the region. The enlarged region will include the areas of Wadi Musa, Al Taybeh, Al Rajef, Dalaghmeit, Al Rasid and South Hisheh.

PKK evades Turkish forces

(Continued from page 1)

out their hostilities against Iraq from Turkish territory," the Observer said.

"Instead of burning her own fingers, Turkey's right place is to lead a prominent role in maintaining the territorial integrity" of Iraq, it added.

Under increasing pressure from the West for its military drive into northern Iraq, Turkey appealed Wednesday for understanding from NATO allies.

Foreign Ministry spokesman Ferhat Ataman claimed Turkey's control over its territory was threatened by PKK rebels and its cross-border offensive was within the bounds of North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) rules.

"It is our natural right to... expect our allies to stand against threats to our territorial integrity in accordance with the wording... of the NATO treaty," Mr. Ataman told reporters.

Turkey is battling a mounting Western backlash to its 10-day-old military operation in northern Iraq.

Germany has suspended a shipment of military hard-

ware to Turkey because of anger over the offensive, Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel said.

Mr. Kinkel said the items affected comprised bridgelaying and other engineering equipment that had been promised to Ankara but not yet delivered. He said the United Nations would have to become "massively involved" in solving Turkey's Kurdish problem.

Germany, which is a major military supplier to Turkey, on Monday froze 150 million marks (\$107 million) in grants promised Ankara to help with the purchase of two German-built frigates worth 800 million marks.

The decisions reflected Bonn's increasing concern at Turkey's incursion into Iraq and suggestions from Turkish military and political leaders that the 35,000 troops they have committed could stay there for a long time.

Bonn's discomfort has been heightened by the fact that Ankara's 10-year battle against separatist Kurds has been accompanied by increasing tension within Germany's 1.8 million-strong Turkish community, among them 400,000 Kurds.

Taiwanese team to visit Jordan

(Continued from page 1)

pragmatic diplomacy pushed for by President Lee has led us out of our diplomatic bottleneck.

"I think that this shows that our achievements in domestic economic development and political reform have received recognition from everyone abroad."

The delegation accompanying Mr. Lee will include Taiwanese business leaders who have potential interest in investing in Jordan, reports said.

According to unidentified academic analysts in Taiwan quoted by Reuters, Taiwan plans "rich economic rewards" in the form of investment for Jordan and the UAE.

Taiwan has plans to develop mineral resources in the Dead Sea and invest in

oil-related projects in the UAE, the analysts were quoted as saying.

The chairman of Taiwan's giant Chinese Petroleum Corporation, Chang Tzu-Yuan, is among the members of the delegation accompanying the president, the agency reported.

According to Taiwanese trade figures cited by the Associated Press, Jordanian imports from Taiwan declined 4.6 per cent from 1993 to \$82.9 million last year. Figures for Jordanian exports to Taiwan were not immediately available.

Taiwan provided \$20 million in aid to Jordan in 1990 to help the kingdom address the impact of losses resulting from the Gulf crisis triggered by the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait.

France rejects call for Libya ban

(Continued from page 1)

Minister Omar Al Muntas-

ser. "Our principle is that the United Nations should conduct an enquiry into the documents recently published" about the explosion

of the airliner.

He said he had sent a message containing this demand to U.N. Secretary General Boutros Ghali. "The documents prove that other parties than Libya are responsible" for the attack, Dr. Abdul Meguid said.

Israeli, Syrian pictures conflict

(Continued from page 1)

rise a quarter of its territory for us to have to give up our army."

But he added that Israel, which has so far publicly offered to return only part of the Heights to test Syria's commitment to peace, understood Syria's demand to a balance in concessions.

Israel Radio reported that "major progress" has been made in the meetings between ambassadors Itamar Rahinovitch of Israel and Syria's Walid Muallem which could produce a deal by Friday.

U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher, who kick-started the ambassadors' talks during a Middle East shuttle earlier this month, sat in on the sessions this week in a bid to hammer out the agreement, the radio said.

The State Department's special coordinator for the Middle East, Dennis Ross, was due to visit Israel and Syria next week to organise a working meeting between military top brass, the radio reported.

The meeting would precede new talks between chiefs of staff from Damascus

and Tel Aviv who met in Washington for the first time last Dec. 22.

Mr. Peres went on to say he supported the deployment of a multinational observer force on the Golan similar to the troops put into the Sinai after Israel and Egypt signed a peace treaty in 1979.

Israel and Syria had been at loggerheads since the United States and Russia launched the peace process in October 1991.

Syria demanded a prior Israeli commitment to return all the Heights while the Jewish state wanted Damascus to pledge that peace would include open borders and full diplomatic relations.

Al Baath, organ of Syria's ruling Baath Party, accused Israeli officials of issuing false optimistic statements and of planting rumours about the possible components of a breakthrough deal.

It said these included talk of ousting hardline Palestinian groups from Damascus, a promise by the United States to remove Syria's name from a list of countries which support "terrorism," agreement on security arrangements and withdrawal from the Golan Heights.

مكتبة الامم المتحدة

Oman sets up fund to guarantee bank deposits

ABU DHABI (AFP) — The Gulf state of Oman has created a fund to guarantee bank deposits in reforms to strengthen its banking sector following world adequacy guidelines and the collapse of BCCI, officials said Wednesday.

The fund, the first of its kind in the six-nation Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), was endorsed by Sultan Qaboos two days ago and measures are underway to put it into action, said Hamud Salim, manager of the banking and development department at the Omani Central Bank.

"The central bank is taking executive steps to launch the fund and determine its capital after it was approved by the sultan. It could operate within a few weeks," he told AFP by telephone from Muscat.

"It will boost national savings and strengthen investors' confidence as it will provide coverage for them in case of any crisis."

The fund's capital will be subscribed jointly by the central bank and commercial banks in Oman and will be based at the central bank. Bankers said the capital could eventually reach 100 million riyals (\$260 million).

The project, which has been under consideration for two years, is part of overall reforms in the banking sector following guidelines on capital adequacy set by the Bank for International Settlements (BIS) for banks worldwide. It defined a floor of eight per cent for adequacy of the ratio between shareholders equity and assets. Such a requirement is intended to ensure all banks have enough funds to face any financial crisis.

The reforms in Oman included interest-free deposits and other incentives for merging banks, greater supervision by the central bank and instructions for the 20 commercial banks to boost capital to at least 10 million riyals (\$260 million). Officials said all banks had complied with those instructions while some units have merged.

The central bank also announced this week it would raise its capital from March 31 by around 14 per cent to 200 million riyals (\$520 million) from 175 million riyals (\$455 million).

The guarantee fund also followed the 1991 collapse of Abu Dhabi-controlled Bank of Credit and Commercial International (BCCI), whose depositors are still awaiting compensation.

Yemen's economy needs surgery — premier

SANAA (R) — Yemen's prime minister was quoted as saying Tuesday that his country's economy had deteriorated and needs a surgical operation, political sources reported.

They said Abdul Aziz Abdul Ghani made the remarks during a meeting with opposition parties and leading political figures to discuss a budget the government plans to present to parliament in a few days.

Mr. Ghani told the meeting a proposed 120 billion rial budget will carry a deficit of 60 billion riyals. He put revenue at 60 billion riyals, government expenditure at 90 billion in addition to 30 billion to be spent on development projects, the sources said.

Impoverished Yemen, a small independent oil producer, has several exchange rates including an official ex-

change rate of 12 riyals to the dollar and an incentive rate for tourism and oil firms operating in Yemen of 25 riyals.

The new budget, the first since 1992, proposes raising a customs exchange rate to 45 riyals from 18, the sources said.

The sources said Mr. Ghani stressed the need to gradually lift subsidies on basic goods and services in an attempt to narrow the deficit and encourage the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund to aid Yemen.

Expected moves to further raise prices has triggered a fresh climb in the value of the dollar on the black market to reach 133 riyals on Tuesday from 115 earlier this month.

The sources said Sanaa plans to double fuel prices soon up to about 12 riyals a litre.

Iranians fear inflation as fuel prices doubled

TEHRAN (R) — Iranians are bracing for a surge in inflation after fuel prices were doubled and the Iranian rial fell against foreign currencies.

After fuel price rises last week, a litre of petrol costs 100 riyals (2.3 U.S. cents at the open market exchange rate), still far below international prices. Diesel and Kerosene cost 20 riyals (0.5 cent) per litre, and fuel oil half as much.

The doubling of fuel prices has led taxi-drivers to demand about 50 to 75 per cent higher fares, residents said.

Tehran radio Tuesday broadcast a warning by officials to taxi-drivers that all fare rises were illegal and asked the public to report violators.

Fears of spiralling prices were sharpened after the Iranian rial fell against foreign currencies since the weekend, losing most of the gains it had made earlier this

month.

In Tehran's open market, the dollar traded for 4,370 riyals up 370 riyals since Sunday, Iran's IRNA news agency said Tuesday.

The pound traded for 6,400 riyals and the German mark sold for 3,000 riyals, it added.

Officials say the doubling of fuel prices, approved by parliament in November, is necessary to stop waste and smuggling to neighbouring states.

Fuel consumption was rising so rapidly that, in about 10 years, Iran OPEC's second exporter, would consume all of the oil it produced, Roads and Transport Minister Akbar Turkani told Tehran radio Tuesday.

Officials put annual inflation in the Iranian year that ended on March 20 at 35 per cent. But newspapers have reported price rises of over five per cent per week on many food items in the last month.

S. Korea applies to rich nations club OECD

PARIS (R) — South Korea marked another step in its 40-year rise out of war and poverty Wednesday when it formally applied to join the OECD, the rich nations' club.

Seoul's ambassador to France handed the application letter from Foreign Minister Gong Ro-Myoung to Jean-Claude Paye, the secretary-general of the Paris-based economic forum.

OECD sources said the Asian country, whose rapid industrialisation and fierce export drive has dragged it from rags to riches in just a

few decades, had already effectively had the green light from the organisation's members, so there was little doubt it would join within a year or so.

The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) noted in its statement that ministers from its 25 wealthy member countries had called on it last year to consider South Korea for membership as soon as Seoul was ready to go ahead.

There is no question South Korea is rich enough.

Arab Gulf ministers approve bank links

DUBAI (R) — Finance ministers of six Arab Gulf states have approved a plan to link their banks in a regional automated teller network, the UAE minister was quoted on Wednesday as saying.

United Arab Emirates (UAE) newspapers quoted minister of state for finance and industry, Ahmed Bin Humaid Al Tayer, as saying that they also approved a unified tariff system applying to reexports of foreign goods.

Mr. Tayer said ministers of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Oman, Kuwait, Bahrain, and Qatar, made the decisions Tuesday in Riyadh.

He gave no further details on how or when the banking plan would be implemented in the GCC, which has about 160 banks and divergent banking regulations.

Mr. Tayer said Tuesday's decisions were part of plans to unify GCC economies in line with an accord signed in 1982 to establish a regional

common market.

Under that agreement, Gulf states are trying to unify their tariffs, which range from four per cent to 20 per cent in the six states, and increase cross-border investment by linking their stock exchanges and deregulation.

Oman and Bahrain signed an agreement this month to cross-list shares on their bourses.

GCC committees have been meeting since last year to agree on a common tariff for each commodity. Gulf news agencies Tuesday quoted Bahrain's Finance Minister Ibrahim Abdul Karim, who presided at the Riyadh meeting, as saying the task involved a review of up to 600 commodities.

The ministers also approved a proposal to allow GCC nationals to "undertake economic activities in the educational field" and facilitate their ability to obtain loans from banks and specialised government lending institutions in GCC states other than their own.

U.S. Fed leaves interest rates steady

WASHINGTON (R) — The U.S. Federal Reserve (Fed) left interest rates unchanged Tuesday after a 4-4-hour policy-setting meeting.

The central bank's Federal Open Market Committee (FOMC) had been expected to hold the line on rates at this meeting amid signs that seven increases during the past year were successfully slowing the heated economy's pace.

The FOMC meeting ended 1:15 p.m. (1815 GMT). Fed spokesman Joe Coyne said. "There is no further announcement."

The Fed last raised key rates by half a percentage point on Feb. 1, bringing them to the highest point in about three years. Short-term rates had cumulatively doubled over the period of a year.

The discount rate, which the Fed charges member banks for loans, now stands at 5.25 per cent. The federal funds rate, which banks charge each other for money, is 6.0 per cent.

Costlier credit is starting to take its toll on the economy. Sales of existing homes fell last month and new-home

building declined in response to higher mortgage rates. Sales of new cars and orders for durable goods also softened.

The central bank is attempting to engineer a soft landing for the U.S. economy that will allow it to keep growing but at a less vigorous rate that will not fire up inflation.

Fed officials have said that they are aiming for annual economic growth of about 2-3 per cent — substantially slower than last year's four per cent but still respectable by historical standards.

An interest rate rise would have helped buttress the dollar by making it more profitable for investors to hold.

While the Fed would prefer the dollar to be stronger, it rarely puts the well-being of the U.S. currency ahead of the health of the domestic economy, analysts said.

Judging by Tuesday's decision, this latest meeting was no exception, but many analysts are betting the FOMC will boost rates again at its next scheduled meeting on May 23.

Kuwait plans \$15b, 10-year oil investment

JOHANNESBURG (R) — Kuwait plans to invest some \$15 billion over the next 10 years to boost its oil output capacity and expand downstream operations, Oil Minister Abdul Mohsen Al Mudej said Tuesday.

This would raise its oil production capacity to at least 3.5 million barrels daily from the current 2.5 million, he said.

Addressing an oil and minerals conference he said several analysts, whom he did not identify, had suggested that more than \$200 billion was needed to expand worldwide production capacity to meet future oil demand.

This figure more than doubled other activities such as storage, refining and transport were included, he added.

He gave no timeframe for the projected investment requirement in global production capacity or for a precise estimate of future demand.

Asked if he considered South or southern Africa a potential area for investment in downstream acquisition by Kuwait, along the lines of its involvement in Europe, he said:

"Yes...our strategy in KPC (Kuwait Petroleum Corp) is to expand our downstream business where we find the potential."

"I think the region itself faces a good future in that business, and I hope we will get to participate in this opportunity," he said.

He said Kuwait, which last year started shipping crude oil to South Africa following the scrapping of anti-apartheid sanctions, was looking forward to increasing its share of the local market.

It was supplying South Africa with 25,000 barrels a day of crude, he said.

He said the sub-Saharan region offered many oil-related opportunities and Kuwait was willing to explore investment prospects which compared favourably with those elsewhere, based on risk-and-reward assessment.

But sound economic and political systems were needed to compete for international investment, he warned.

"It is hoped that the economic and political measures taken by some sub-Saharan countries such as South Africa in the last few years represent the beginning of a new chapter in the history of the region," he said.

Kuwait, he said, remained committed to aiding the region's social and economic development, having steered \$1.3 billion in soft loans grants to it over the past 30 years, in addition to other forms of aid.

Greek strikes intensify

ATHENS (AFP) — Shopowners slammed down their shutters Wednesday as a general strike by 700,000 shopworkers and tradesmen hit home with "one-hundred per cent" support, union sources said. The nationwide strike was in protest against reforms that have dramatically increased taxes on small businesses and the agriculture sector. Only supermarkets, department stores, pharmacies and service stations remained open for business, as the traders joined protesting farmers who have been blocking the country's main access roads for the past ten days.

Striking shopkeepers held a mass meeting in the centre of Athens before marching to the parliament building, where Finance Minister Aleksis Papadopoulos refused to meet them. The minister said the government was determined to carry through its controversial proposals, however.

Demonstrations were also held in other big cities and towns, where protesters handed in petitions to local authorities. The 24-hour strike was part of an intensifying campaign against the Socialist government's biting tax reforms.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR THURSDAY MARCH 30, 1995

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

ARIES (March 21 to April 19) Don't be taken in by some situation that looks good today but may be deceptive causing you loss of time and money. Be very wise in considering all the angles.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20) The situation at home could be deceiving, but say little now and plan how to handle problems wisely for peacekeeping there. You can profit a great deal from this.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 21) Concentrate on how to economize more instead of spending like there's no tomorrow or you could end up in the poor house. Don't let others impose on you.

MOON CHILDREN (June 22 to July 21) You have to use more care in handling money at this time if you wish to avoid possibly heavy losses in any financial endeavour.

LEO (July 22 to August 21) You may think you can do more than you actually can today, so be more practical and conserve some energy. Use your fine intuitive faculties, too.

VIRGO (August 22 to September 22) A private matter is just not what it seems to be so double check all the facts today and figure it out before making decision about what you want to do.

LIBRA (September 23 to October 22) Accept only the best of invitations for later in the day and show others that you have wisdom. Strive for increased happiness on your part.

SCORPIO (October 23 to November 21) Make sure you don't take any risks in career affairs or you could regret it later. Strive for more harmony at home for your own happiness.

SAGITTARIUS (November 22 to December 21) You are able to engage in new outlets that could produce added income in the future. State your aims clearly to associates who can help.

CAPRICORN (December 22 to January 20) Study both assets and disbursements well so you know exactly where you stand today. Sidelstep a troublemaker or there could be problems.

AQUARIUS (January 21 to February 19) Obtain the data you need today from the right sources. Then look into new avenues of expression that could add to your income.

PISCES (February 20 to March 20) Get busy and remove whatever is not suitable in your environment today. Handle all the tasks ahead of you in a positive fashion for success.

Birthstone of March: Aquamarine — Jasper

FORECAST FOR FRIDAY MARCH 31, 1995

ARIES (March 21 to April 19) Be sure you follow standard practices today to gain the results you want. Be less demanding of family members or there could be problems.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20) Take the right steps to improve your financial position. Discuss with a successful person how to invest your money more wisely.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 21) Schedule your activities wisely so you get maximum use of your time today. Be sure to use extreme caution in motion as you could have a problem.

MOON CHILDREN (June 22 to July 21) You can understand how to improve your financial condition so don't waste valuable time and get as much done as possible.

LEO (July 22 to August 21) Be sure to make definite plans to gain your most important aims today. Steer clear of a foe who could spoil your happiness with your family and don't let him get anywhere near them.

VIRGO (August 22 to September 22) Try to save as much money as you can now in case of a possible emergency in the days ahead. Show more affection and consideration to your mate.

LIBRA (September 23 to October 22) Go after important aims with more enthusiasm and effort and you can easily gain them. Be alert at all times today for problem situations.

SCORPIO (October 23 to November 21) Don't become irate at one who has power over your affairs or you could get into serious trouble. Be sure to keep your promises you've made to others.

SAGITTARIUS (November 22 to December 21) You can make a good impression on newcomers by showing you're honest and decent in all your activities today. Relax at home tonight with loved ones.

CAPRICORN (December 22 to January 20) Be careful you don't take any chances with business matters today or you could jeopardise your security with your company.

AQUARIUS (January 21 to February 19) Making a decision plans to gain your most important aims today. Come to a better accord with associates and think constructively about a new endeavour that has attracted your attention.

PISCES (February 20 to March 20) Stop wasting time today and attend to important duties immediately. Contact an influential person who can be helpful in planning the future. Follow through for big results.

Birthstone of March: Aquamarine — Jasper

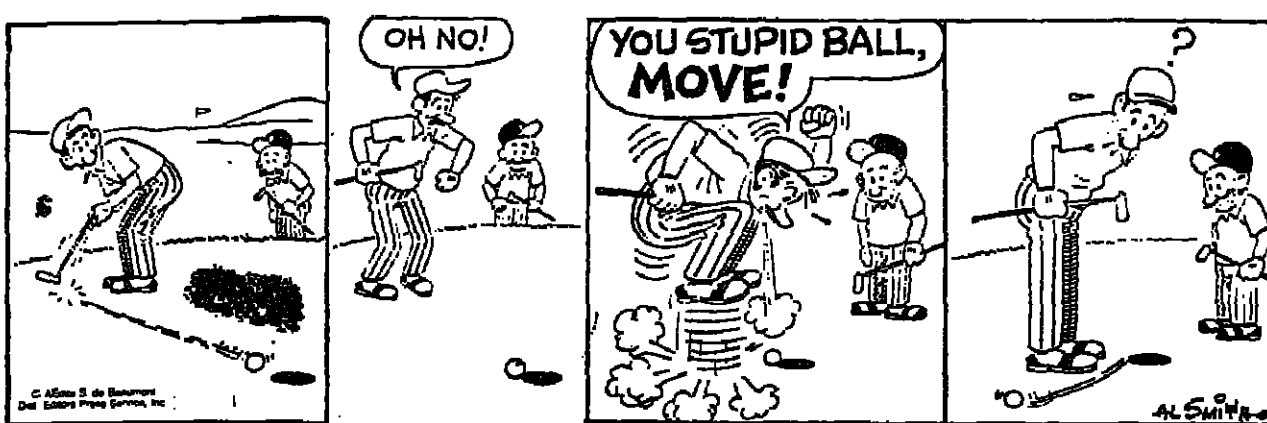
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Andy Capp



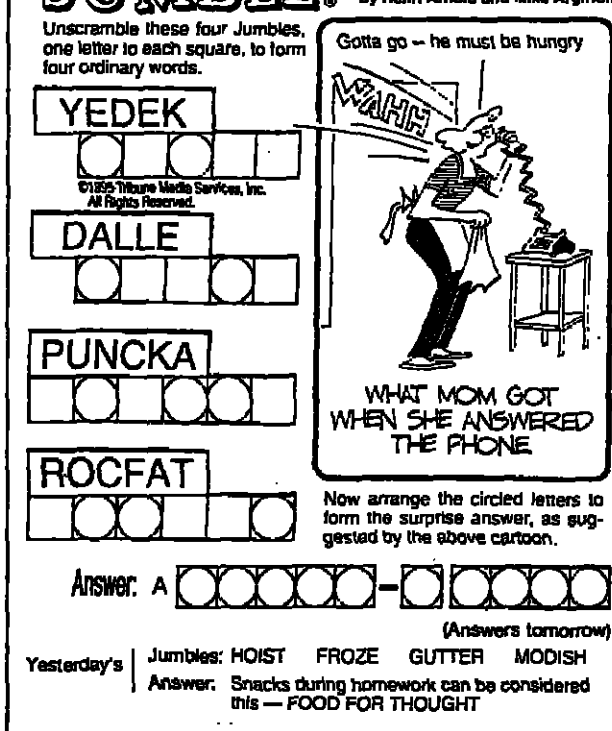
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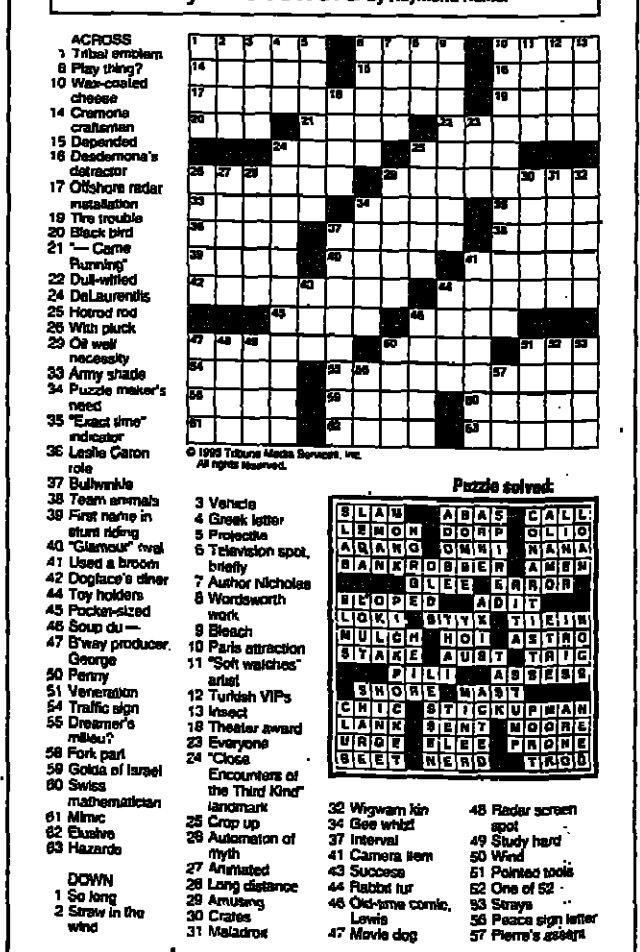
THE BETTER HALF



JUMBLE



THE Daily Crossword



Business daily beat

A review of economic news from the Arabic press

Al Ra'i will distribute 50 per cent dividends

★THE GENERAL assembly of the Jordan Press Foundation Company, publisher of Al Ra'i and the Jordan Times, has approved the distribution of JD 1 million, or 50 per cent, dividends to shareholders. The company earned JD 7.98 million from newspaper sales and advertising in 1994 compared to JD 7.51 million in 1993. But, due to higher cost of paper, the net profit at the end of last year was JD 1.75 million compared to JD 1.97 million at the end of 1993 (Al Ra'i).

★THE GENERAL assembly of the Jordan Press and Publishing Company that issues the Arabic daily Al Dustour has approved the distribution of JD 300,000, or 15 per cent, dividends to shareholders. The company earned JD 5.37 million of which 23 per cent were from newspaper sales, 49 per cent from advertising, 20 per cent from commercial printing and eight per cent from printing books for export. Cost of paper and other printing materials amounted to JD 4.56 million, or 54 per cent of the expenditure, while salaries accounted for 28 per cent and general and administrative expenses for 13 per cent. Net profit for 1994 stood at JD 795,000 (Al Dustour).

★NET PROFITS of the Middle East Insurance Company plunged from JD 817,015 in 1993 to JD 353,614 last year. The company's 1994 annual report attributed the big drop to lower returns from investments from JD 876,304 in 1993 to JD 349,642 last year due to the general economic slowdown. Yet, despite the lower returns, the company increased its portfolio of investments to JD 7.87 million in 1997. In the insurance business, the company collected a total of JD 7.6 million of premiums whereas paid claims totalled JD 3.65 million in 1994. The company, which is not likely to distribute dividends this year, has a total balance sheet figure of JD 9.75 million. JD 700,000 above the 1993 total (Al Aswaq).

★THE GENERAL assembly of the National Engineering Industries Company and the general assembly of the Multi-Industries National Company agreed to merge the two companies into the new National Engineering Multi-Industries Company. The new company will have a capital of JD 30 million being the combined capital of both previous companies in addition to JD 3.75 million of new shares that will put private subscription at a later stage. The new shares will be at JD 1 per share without any premium (Al Aswaq).

★INTENSIVE MEETINGS are being held at the Ministry of Industry and Trade to finalise the draft of a new companies' law. According to the comptroller of companies, the law will be completed and presented to the Council of Ministers in two months (Al Dustour).

★THE COUNCIL of ministers approved the distribution of JD 20 million of yields from fuel and licensing fees to the Municipality of Greater Amman (MGA) and municipal and rural councils throughout the country. JD 4 million will be given to MGA alone, JD 12 million to municipal councils and JD 4 million to rural councils and other joint service committees (Al Ra'i).

★COORDINATION BETWEEN the Municipality of Greater Amman and the Ministry of Water and Irrigation is expected to save both government bodies a considerable amount of their spending. The coordination will be manifested in giving priority to ministry projects for changing the water network in Amman before the municipality begins re-paving the roads (Al Ra'i).

Lebanon's Solidere reports \$18.1 million profit

BEIRUT (R) — Solidere Company, set up to rebuild the war-damaged heart of Beirut, has announced a profit of \$18.1 million in its first eight months of operations since incorporation in May 1994.

Solidere, which raised \$650 million in a share offer in January 1994, is the flagship of billionaire Prime Minister Rafik Al Hariri's ambitious plans to rebuild Lebanon from the ruins of its 1975-90 civil war.

Mr. Hariri, whose personal fortune is estimated at \$4 billion, has bought \$125 million worth of Solidere shares. The company has cleared most of the wrecked buildings in the 1.6 million-sq-

metre central district and contractors have begun infrastructure work prior to reconstruction.

Chairman Nasser Chamaa said the company had not yet decided whether to issue a dividend on the profit, derived mainly from investment of capital. Profit was generated on an interest income of \$24.2 million.

"Based on the weighted average number of shares outstanding during the period this gives an earnings per share of \$1," Mr. Chamaa told a news conference.

Citing other key results for fiscal 1994, Mr. Chamaa said the total assets of the Lebanese Company for the Development and Recon-

struction of Beirut District were \$1.778 billion, made up mostly of investment properties and cash in bank.

The question of whether to issue a dividend to the 20,000 subscribers would be put to shareholders' general meeting in the board would recommend a dividend.

Solidere's \$100 A- and B-shares rose to about \$170 within a few weeks but have

JORDAN FINANCIAL MARKET				
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ORGANIZED MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR WEDNESDAY 29/03/1995				
COMPANY'S NAME	NO. OF SHARES	TRADED	PREV. CLOSING	NEW CLOSING
JORDAN NATIONAL BANK	22746	103127	4.480	4.580
JORDAN NATIONAL BANK / NEW	2430	10733	4.360	4.440
BANK OF JORDAN	1353	4337	3.200	3.200
MIDDLE EAST INVESTMENT BANK	1000	1420	1.420	1.420
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT BANK	150	413	2.640	2.750
THE HOUSING BANK	7250	44075	6.080	6.100
JORDAN KOWAT BANK	628	1787	2.870	2.880
JORDAN GULF BANK	6100	7022	1.130	1.180
JORDAN ISLAMIC BANK	17864	69294	3.790	3.900
UNIVERSAL BANK	500	1650	3.300	3.300
JORDAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE BANK	750	2688	3.600	3.800
SEIT KHALI SAVINGS/INVESTMENT FOR HOUSING	1000	3020	3.000	3.020
ARAB BANK FOR INVESTMENT	106500	119460	1.090	1.140
PHILADELPHIA INVESTMENT BANK	2100	2600	1.210	1.240
BANKS SECTOR	170371	371579	INDEX NUMBER: 160.12	CHANGE: +0.46%
ARABIAN SEAS INSURANCE	500	900	1.800	1.800
JORDAN FRENCH INSURANCE	21400	55834	2.580	2.610
ARAB LIFE & ACCIDENT INSURANCE	4000	10400	2.600	2.600
INSURANCE SECTOR	25900	67134	INDEX NUMBER: 135.46	CHANGE: +0.14%
JORDANIAN ELECTRIC POWER	21350	34664	1.630	1.630
JORDANIAN ELECTRIC POWER / NEW	111800	175111	1.540	1.570
JORDAN BOTTEL & TOURISM	2750	20575	7.250	7.500
ARAB INTERNATIONAL HOTELS	717030	435702	3.750	3.740
ARAB INTERNATIONAL HOTELS / NEW	56399	328156	5.570	5.850
JORDAN NATIONAL SHIPPING LINES	15850	46192	2.880	2.970
NATIONAL PORTFOLIO SECURITIES	7000	13850	1.900	2.000
REAL ESTATE INVESTMENT	4400	8177	1.180	1.180
JORDAN INTERNATIONAL TRADING CENTER	525	549	1.000	1.050
MACHINERY EQUIP. REPAIRING & MAINTENANCE	3150	2150	1.690	1.680
JORDAN PRESS FOUNDATION / AL RA'I	100	1005	10.150	10.150
UNITED MIDDLE EAST & CONSUMER HOTELS	12700	30457	2.350	2.420
ARAB INTER. FOR INVESTMENT & EDUCATION	4750	15732	3.300	3.320
SERVICES SECTOR	957804	5030689	INDEX NUMBER: 132.76	CHANGE: +2.16%
ATTACHEES CONST. MATERIAL MANUFACTURING	700	726	1.060	1.030
THE JORDAN CEMENT FACTORIES	28469	86703	3.000	3.050
THE ARAB POTASH/NEW	400	1824	4.520	4.600
JORDAN PETROLEUM REFINERY	908	8506	9.400	9.350
WOLAN INDUSTRIES	600	10504	1.750	1.740
THE INDUSTRIAL COMMERCIAL & AGRICULTURAL	1350	4671	3.450	3.500
THE JORDAN WOODSTOCK MILLS	950	7138	7.370	7.600
ARAB PHARMACEUTICAL MANUFACTURING	26127	107443	4.050	4.240
JORDAN CEMENT INDUSTRIES	2100	2175	2.750	2.750
THE JORDAN PIPES MANUFACTURING	2100	5657	2.680	2.700
THE PUBLIC MINING	200	570	2.920	2.850
SPINNING & WEAVING	4750	12113	2.550	2.550
DAVITA INDUSTRIES	9750	24750	2.480	2.500
DAR AL DAMA DEVELOPMENT & INVESTMENT	2350	17938	7.500	7.650
ARAB INVESTMENT & INTERNATIONAL TRADE	36000	33155	1.890	1.930
ARAB ALUMINUM INDUSTRY	2900	25695	6.460	6.600
LIVESTOCK & POULTRY	101500	68040	6.500	6.600
ARAB PAPER CONVERTING & TRADING	14900	50934	1.440	1.470
INTERMEDIATE PETRO-CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES	14700	30995	2.040	2.140
JORDAN ROBOLOO INDUSTRIES	9600	11417	1.210	1.190
JORDAN INDUSTRIES & MANUFACTURING	16500	11502	2.580	2.680
NATIONAL CABLE & WIRE MANUFACTURING	2700	12110	4.320	4.540
JORDAN SULPHO-CHEMICALS	750	1116	1.420	1.490
ARAB CENTER FOR PHARM. & CHEMICALS	800	18225	2.190	2.240
EXPORT INVESTMENT	3023	3023	1.550	1.550
UNIVERSAL MODERN INDUSTRIES	8150	28661	3.470	3.520
JORDAN INDUSTRIAL RESOURCES CO.	5900	11902	1.950	2.050
U.S. & EUROPEAN SECTOR	323782	587654	INDEX NUMBER: 120.25	CHANGE: +1.52%
GRAND TOTAL	1477857	6057056	INDEX NUMBER: 141.77	CHANGE: +0.94%
NO. OF TRADED SHARES IN PARALLEL MARKET		183091		
VALUE TRADED IN PARALLEL MARKET		195275		

Australian sheep return to lucrative Saudi market

DUBAI (R) — Australia's resumption in April of live sheep exports to Saudi Arabia will push down prices but Australia is not expected to regain its share of the kingdom's some \$300 million a year market, an official said Tuesday.

"It will help to reduce prices and add stability to the market," Peter Wynne, chief executive of the Bahrain-based regional office of the Australian meat and Livestock Corporation, told Reuters by telephone.

Australia announced last week that it would resume live sheep exports to Saudi Arabia.

Sheep exports stopped four-and-a-half years ago when Riyadh rejected a boatload of old and diseased Australian sheep. The first shipment of sheep is expected to leave Australia for the kingdom as early as next month.

The breakthrough came after Australian sheep traders accepted strict Saudi Arabian standards, including health and quality requirements.

Sheep consumption is high in the Gulf and many Muslims slaughter live stock during feasts and celebrations.

"We will not attain the same levels ... but we will gain a leading share of the market," added Mr. Wynne.

Before exports to Saudi Arabia were halted in 1990, Australian live sheep exports to the Kingdom were worth about \$109 million.

Saudi Arabia later turned to New Zealand and China to compensate for the loss of Australian sheep. But industry officials expect Australian sheep dealers to gradually recapture a leading stake in the market.

"We will regain our position because Australia will be able to deliver quality sheep that are cheaper," Mr. Wynne said. "Our sheep will cost between \$45 to \$50 (a head) whereas a New Zealand sheep will cost them about \$60."

But Mr. Wynne acknowledged that several factors will make it very difficult for Australian sheep dealers to export to the kingdom at previous rates. Old, high priced sheep will now have to be replaced by young more expensive livestock.

In the late 1980s, Australian sheep exports to the kingdom peaked at 3.5 million head per year.

Australia's supply of sheep has fallen to 130 million from 180 million heads due to drought and a recovery in wool industry, experts said.

"We expect to supply a million head of sheep over the next 12 months (to Saudi Arabia) but over the next three or four years we will be satisfied if we attain two million head per year," said Wynne.

Colombo calls for bids to privatise Air Lanka

COLOMBO (AFP) — Sri Lanka plans to call for investment proposals to privatise national carrier Air Lanka as part of a programme to divest state enterprises, the government announced here Wednesday.

The main privatisation regulatory authority, the Public Enterprise Reform Committee (PERC), said it will advertise Air Lanka next month, calling for a "strategic partner" to run the airline.

PERC Chairman Rajan Asirvatham said a World Bank team had prepared the terms of reference for potential investors or any other partner to come up with proposals to take over Air Lanka.

Official sources said the government was keen to ensure that the national carrier was in the hands of private management at least by mid 1996 because the airline debt servicing was too heavy on the budget.

The airline had bought a new Airbus aircraft from the previous regime, which was voted out at the August parliamentary elections.

Mr. Asirvatham said the airline had received a proposal from the Dubai Airport Free Zone to take over the Lankan government-owned Orient Lanka Ltd, which had a monopoly on liquor, tobacco and chocolate sales at Colombo airport.

However, the government will call for open proposals before selling Orient Lanka Ltd.

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LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at midsession on the London Foreign Exchange and bullion markets Wednesday.

U.S. \$1.00 costs	1.4042/52	Canadian dollar
	1.3768/78	Deutschmarks
	1.5424/34	Dutch guilders
	1.1336/46	Swiss francs
	22.36/40	Belgian francs
	4.8733/83	French francs
	1699.04/0	Italian lire
	88.12/22	Japanese yen
	7.3075/75	Swedish crowns
	6.1670/20	Norwegian crowns
	5.5055/05	Danish crowns
One sterling	\$1.6154/64	
One ounce of gold	\$382.70/383.20	

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Federation Cup

Swiss led by teenage team

RIS (AFP) — Switzerland to youth in their bid to the leading nations in the Cup with 14-year-old Martina Hingis leading their team during next month's Europe/Africa qualifying rounds at the Hyatt La Manga Club in southern Spain in April 17.

By the way, Hingis' mother Melanie Hingis will captain the Swiss team which includes other teenagers — Geraldine Rami and Joana Manta as well as 23-year-old Aneta Zardo.

Despite the presence of the 1994 ITF junior world champion, the Swiss team face stiff opposition for two available places in the World Group One or two in the year. For some of the biggest names in European tennis will be taking part in the group.

Finland, Georgia, Bulgaria, Latvia, Hungary, Israel, Romania, Russia, and the Ukraine. This is the first year of the "Davis Cup-style" format in which eight nations play-off in the elite World Group. The record entry of 87 national competitions in the Americas, Europe, Asia/Oceania for the Davis Cup.

The right to challenge the four first-round losers in Group One. The winners of these play-offs will be admitted to Group One in 1996.

The first round winners in Group One will play the first round losers of the World Group to decide the composition of next year's World Group.

Deborah Evans, Fed Cup executive director, said: "We are extremely excited about the new format — not least by the response from the world's top players. We are seeking to raise the profile of the Fed Cup to the same level as the Davis Cup."

First-round ties in the World Group and Group One, decided by two singles on the first day and two singles and a doubles on the second, take place over the weekend of April 22/23.

The eight nations in the World Group are defending champions Spain, Bulgaria, Japan, Germany, France, South Africa, Austria and the United States.

Group One comprises Argentina, Indonesia, Slovak Republic, Australia, Italy, Canada, Sweden and Netherlands.

Team nominations for the Europe/Africa qualifying Group One to be played at the Hyatt La Manga Club in Southern Spain from April 17-21:

Belarus: Natalia Zvereva, Marina Stels, Vera Zhukovets, Captain: Marina Zvereva.

Belgium: Sabine Appelmans, Laurence Courtis, Nancy Feber, Dominique Monami, Captain: Steve Martens.

Croatia: Iva Majoli, Maja Palaversic, Nadine Ercegovic, Marijana Kovacevic, Captain: Vjeran Frisovic.

Czech Republic: Jana Novotna, Helena Sukova, Radka Bobkova, Petra Langrova, Captain: Hana Mandlikova.

Finland: Nanne Dahlman, Petra Thoren, Linda Jansson, Hannu-Katri Aalto, Captain: Mauri Dahlman.

Georgia: Leila Meskhi, Nino Louarsabichvili, Victoria Bakhtadze, Captain: Ann Jones.

Britain: Clare Wood, Shri-Ann Siddall, Julie Pallin, Jo Durie, Captain: Ann Jones.

Latvia: Larisa Savchenkov-Neiland, Una Bushevisita, Agnese Blumberga, Captain: Daiga Jaska.

Hungary: Andrea Temesvari, Andrea Noszaly, Petra Mandula, Captain: Otto Temesvari.

Israel: Anna Smashnova, Shiri Burstein, Hila Rosen, Natali Cahana, Captain: Ilana Berger.

Poland: Katarzyna Nowak, Aleksandra Olza, Magdalena Grzybowska, Magdalena Mroz, Captain: Henryk Hoffman.

Romania: Irina Spirlea, Roxandra Dragomir, Catalina Cristea, Captain: Florenta Mihai.

Russia: Elena Likhoviseva, Elena Makarova, Eugenia Manikova, Olga Ivanova, Captain: Victor Yanchuk.

Slovenia: Tina Krizan, Barbara Mulej, Karin Lusnir, Tjasa Jezernik, Captain: Mima Jausovec.

Switzerland: Martina Hingis, Emanuela Zardo, Geraldine Rami, Joana Manta, Captain: Melanie Zug-Hingis.

Ukraine: Natalia Medvedeva, Olga Lugina, Talina Beiko, Irina Soukhova, Captain: Svetlana Medvedeva.

Jordan scores NBA season-high 55 points
Rockets, Suns, Magic and Blazers lose

NEW YORK (R) — Air Jordan ruled in New York City, but out west in Sacramento, the Magic failed.

Michael Jordan scored an NBA season-high 55 points and hit Bill Wennington with a perfect pass under the hoop for the winning basket with 3.1 seconds to go as the Chicago Bulls edged the New York Knicks 113-111 Tuesday.

"Everyone was hopping to the ball the whole game," said Wennington, who scored his only basket of the game after Knicks centre Patrick Ewing left him to double-team Jordan.

"So we gave the open side to Michael to create. He was going to look from wherever the rotation came from and I knew Patrick would leave me. I just stepped under the basket and put it in."

Jordan, in his fifth game back in the NBA, hit 21-of-37 from the field to surpass the 53 points Willie Burton of the Philadelphia 76ers tallied against Miami on December 13.

"My attitude was to just relax and let the game come to me," said Jordan.

Scottie Pippen collected 19 points, nine rebounds and eight assists and B.J. Armstrong scored 16 points as the Bulls won their second straight.

Ewing led New York with 36 points, 27 in the second half.

"I know what will be written about is what Michael did but let's also remember from this game how Patrick went off in the second half," Knicks coach Pat Riley said.

"He was very active, blocking shots, helping out on defense. He made seven or eight incredible plays."

In Sacramento, Mitch Richmond scored 35 points and Walt Williams added 26,

including four in a 12-2 game-ending run, as the Kings upset the Orlando Magic 117-106.

The Kings rallied from a 10-point fourth-quarter deficit, outscoring the Magic 36-18 in the final period.

Shaquille O'Neal scored 32 points, Horace Grant had 22 and Anfernee Hardaway 21 for the NBA-best Magic (52-18), who have lost 10 of their last 13 road games.

Sacramento has a one-game lead over Denver for the eighth and final Western Conference playoff spot.

In Phoenix, Jeff Hornacek scored 31 points to lead the Utah Jazz to a 111-102 victory over the Suns.

Karl Malone had 26 points and 16 rebounds and John Stockton added 22 points and 12 assists for the Jazz, who surpassed San Antonio for the best record in the Western Conference (52-19).

Dan Majerle scored 20 points and Kevin Johnson 19 for the Suns, who shot just 36 per cent (31-of-86) from the field and lost their third straight for the first time this season.

Charles Barkley scored 18 points on 7-of-23 shooting and failed to lead Phoenix in scoring and rebounding for the first time in 12 games. Barkley was ejected with 3:02 left after receiving his second technical foul for arguing with the referees.

In Houston, Cedric Ceballos and Elden Campbell scored 17 points apiece to lead six Lakers in double figures as Los Angeles beat the undermanned Rockets 106-96.

Carl Herrera scored 22 points and Clyde Drexler had 20 for Houston, which played without sidelined starters Hakeem Olajuwon and Vernon Maxwell. The Rockets lost for the fifth time in five games.

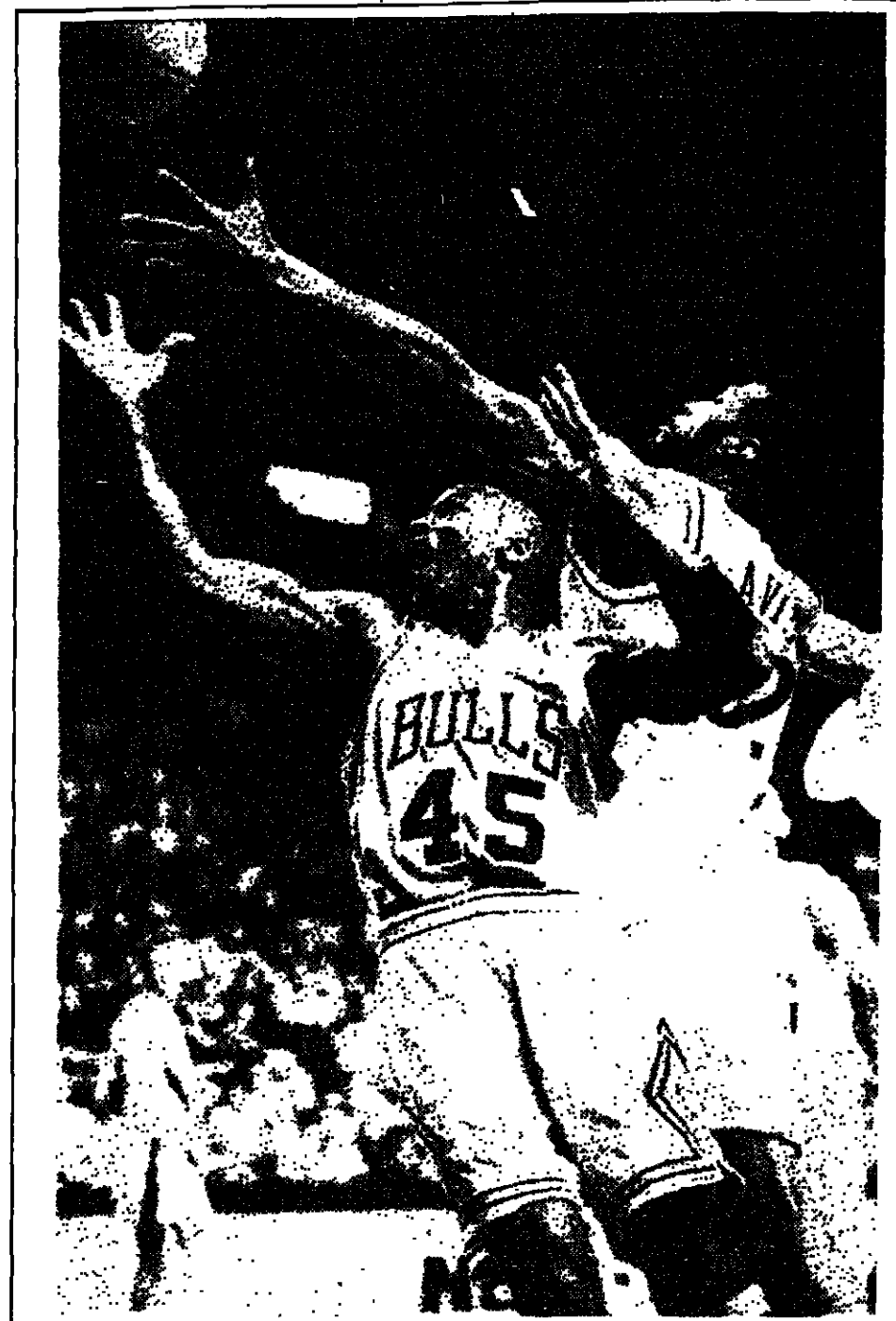
In Miami, Dee Brown tied a career high with 41 points and Dominique Wilkins added 19 to help the Boston Celtics to a 126-115 victory over the Heat.

Dino Radja added 18 points and 12 rebounds for Boston, which moved into the eighth and final Eastern Conference playoff spot despite winning just their third in 12 games.

Glen Rice scored 39 points and rookie Khalid Reeves had a career-high 24 for Miami, which lost its second straight and fell a half-game behind Boston, along with New Jersey and Milwaukee.

At New Jersey, Chris Mullin scored 25 points to lead seven Warriors in double figures as Golden State defeated the Nets 127-113 to end a four-game losing streak.

Kenny Anderson collected 22 points and 14 assists and Derrick Coleman also scored 22 for the Nets, who were



Chicago Bulls star Michael Jordan #45 makes a rebound (AFP photo)

without injured starting forward P.J. Brown.

In Dallas, Jamal Mashburn scored 21 points and Lucious Harris 17 as the Mavericks beat the Milwaukee Bucks 114-93.

Dallas won its fifth straight.

Glenn Robinson scored 21 and Marty Conlon netted 14 for Milwaukee.

In Portland, Mookie Blaylock scored 28 points as the Atlanta Hawks snapped a three-game losing streak, 102-91 over the Trail Blazers.

Atlanta nearly squandered a 17-point lead by going scoreless over the first 7:30 of the fourth quarter.

Clifford Robinson scored 30 points for Portland, which has dropped four straight.

Olajuwon suffering from anemia

Houston Rockets star centre Hakeem Olajuwon, who

skipped practice Monday after complaining of fatigue,

has been diagnosed with iron deficiency anemia and primary hypothyroidism, the team said Tuesday.

Olajuwon felt fatigued and requested an examination following Sunday's 107-96 loss in Los Angeles to the Lakers, although he had 20 points, 12 rebounds and six blocked shots in the game.

"The last five games, I've been tired after two minutes," Olajuwon complained after the defeat.

"How can you be tired that quick?"

Results of a blood test suggest iron deficiency anemia and hypothyroidism, according to team physician James Muntz, who prescribed rest, iron and thyroid replacement medications.

The All-Star centre, who led the Rocket to their first NBA championship last season and was named the league's most valuable player, will continue to practice and lift weights under supervision.

RESULTS			
Boston	126	Miami	115
Golden State	127	New Jersey	113
Chicago	113	New York	111
Dallas	114	Milwaukee	93
L.A. Lakers	106	Houston	96
Utah	111	Phoenix	102
Atlanta	102	Portland	91
Sacramento	117	Orlando	106

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The Modern School / Al-Asriyya is a school that aims at providing quality education and creating a homogeneous warm environment that binds teachers, students and parents. It is keen on developing cultural awareness and behaviour compatible with our grand heritage of family ties and modernized social values. The strategy of the Modern School / Al-Asriyya is to build a strong Arabic language base together with a strong English that would facilitate opening new horizons in education and international contacts. Special care shall be given to other areas in education, i.e. developing a scientific approach to thinking and analysis, discovering and encouraging special talents and providing for special learning needs. To meet such criteria, highly qualified and experienced staff are needed. Some vacancies are still open in the following fields for the school year 1995/96:

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- Kindergarten teachers
- Qualified Nurse

The Basic School (grades 1-8):

- Home-room teachers (Grades 1-3)
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- Mathematics
- Sciences (Physics, Chemistry, Biology)
- Social Studies (History, Geography, etc.)
- Computer Education
- Creative Arts

Qualifications Required:

- Bachelor Degree in Child Education for KG teachers.
- Bachelor degree in the relevant subject matter with a minimum of three years experience.
- Good command of English particularly for Sciences, Mathematics, Social Sciences, Computer Education, and KG teachers.

Applicants are kindly invited to send their CV and a recent photograph to:
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SPORTS IN BRIEF

McClellan out of trauma ward

LONDON (AP) — A month after suffering brain injuries in a world title fight, American boxer Gerald McClellan is breathing on his own and occasionally opens his eyes and moves his arms. McClellan collapsed in the eighth round of his 10th-round bout in London on Jan. 25. He was rushed to a hospital, where a massive blood clot was removed from his brain. McClellan, 27, of Freeport, Ill., spent several days on a life support machine before doctors gradually brought him off sedation.

NBA's Maxwell sued

PORTLAND (AP) — The Portland Trail Blazers fan who was punched by Vernon Maxwell during a game last month is suing the National Basketball Association (NBA) star and the Houston Rockets for 4.5 million dollars. Steve George is seeking \$1.4 million from Maxwell for his actions on February 7, and for allegedly slanderous comments he made later. He is also seeking another \$3.1 million from the club for failing to control the player. George's lawyer, Richard Maizels, said the team was sued "on the theory that the Houston Rockets are worth a lot more than Vernon Maxwell, and as a deterrent to bring home the fact that they have to do something with their ballplayers who get out of control."

Ondieki out of London marathon

LONDON (AP) — Australian Lisa Ondieki pulled out of Sunday's London Marathon on Wednesday. Ondieki, one of the favorites to win the race, was advised by her doctor not to run after picking up Achilles injury. Ondieki was second in 1993 but Scotland's Liz McColgan who came third that year, declared: "It will still be a very competitive race without her." The 1993 race was the Scot's last major race before she was sidelined by back and knee injuries.

Banned runner expecting baby

LONDON (R) — Banned British athlete Diane Modahl is expecting a baby in October, her husband Vicente said on Tuesday. The 800 metres runner is due to appeal next month against a four-year ban for drug-taking. It was

imposed after she was tested at an athletics meeting in Lisbon last June when large amounts of the male hormone testosterone were found in a urine sample. Modahl, 28, and her husband and coach Vicente have consistently maintained there was an innocent explanation.

Inspectors happy with Imola

IMOLA (R) — Formula One safety inspectors expressed satisfaction on Tuesday with changes made to the Imola race track where Ayrton Senna and Roland Ratzenberger were killed last year. The Sagis Company that runs Imola said that FIA inspectors Roland Bruynseraede and Jean Brown surveyed the circuit to see if it conformed to safety improvements required for the San Marino Grand Prix on April 30. It quoted Bruynseraede as saying the work had been carried out "exactly as specified."

Elf: Brazilian GP fuel was legal

PARIS (R) — French oil giant Elf said on Tuesday that the fuel it supplied to teams for Sunday's Brazilian Grand Prix was legal and obeyed rules set by the International Automobile Federation (FIA). The Benetton and Williams teams have both lodged appeals after their drivers Michael Schumacher and David Coulthard were disqualified following the race for allegedly using illegal fuel. World champion Schumacher finished the race in first place, with Coulthard second.

Tyson to hold press conference

CLEVELAND (AP) — Former world heavyweight boxing champion Mike Tyson, whose release from prison on Saturday unleashed a deluge of speculation on his future in boxing, will read a statement at a press conference here on Thursday — but he will not answer questions. Cynthia Case, a spokeswoman for Grud Arena, said the former champion had contacted the arena, the home of the Cleveland Cavaliers basketball team, on Tuesday. "He told us he is going to read a statement and walk off," she said. Tyson was freed from an Indiana Prison on Saturday after serving three years of a six year sentence for rape. He returned to his rural estate in Southington, Ohio, and has not spoken publicly since.

Martinez wins at Family Circle Cup

HILTON HEAD ISLAND, South Carolina (Agencies) —

Conchita Martinez, the defending champion and No. 2 seed, routed Elena Makarova 6-0, 6-2 Tuesday while four other seeds lost in the opening opening round at the Family Circle Magazine Cup.

The fourth-ranked Martinez, who just booked-up with well-known Brazilian tennis coach Carlos Kirmayr, who also coached Gabriela Sabatini and Arantxa Sanchez Vicario, outclassed the 47th-ranked makarova in every aspect of the game. Martinez, the reigning Wimbledon champion, didn't even perspire in the 52-minute match.

"I feel that I need some more matches to play my best tennis," Martinez said. "Today, she didn't give me that much competition to prove myself."

Fifth-seeded Magdalena Maleeva of Bulgaria went the distance with 70th-ranked Rachel McQuillan before securing a 6-3 1-6 6-4 second-round victory.

In first-round matches, 43rd-ranked Anna Smashnova upset 12th-seeded and 23rd-ranked Zina Garrison Jackson 6-1 2-6 6-4 in the first round.

In second-round play, 51st-ranked Silvia Farina of Italy upset seventh-seeded and 17th-ranked Lori McNeil of the United States 6-3 6-1.

Martinez won the first nine games to take a 6-0 3-0 lead,



Conchita Martinez

before Makarova finally held her serve in the fourth game of the second set. Makarova raised her arms in the air in a gesture of triumph.

But her success was brief — Makarova only held her serve one other time in the match.

She only won 18 of 44 points on her serve — 14 of 31 points when her first serve went in and four of 13 points when her second serve was good.

In contrast, Martinez won 29 of 39 points on her serve. "I think I played pretty well," Martinez said. "She made the mistakes which is what I tried to make her do."

Both the 10th-ranked Maleeva and McQuillan had trouble with their serving during the one-hour, 55-minute match.

Nippon lose to Team NZ

SAN DIEGO (AP) — Japan's second try for the America's Cup ended ignominiously Tuesday when Nippon Challenge lost to the relentless Team New Zealand by 3 minutes 45 seconds — its eighth consecutive defeat.

The loss mathematically eliminated Nippon from advancing past the challenger semi-finals, and John Bertrand's oneAustralia won by 1:43 to push Chris Dickson's TAG Heuer Challenge to the edge in the fight to follow Team New Zealand into the finals.

Team New Zealand, winner of 30 of 31 races, then announced it would not sail its last three races of the semi-finals Thursday through Saturday and use the time to prepare for the finals starting April 11. The Kiwis said they may switch boats back to Black Magic 2 from the Black Magic 1 they have used in the semi-finals.

Skipper Russell Coutts said: "We've made some changes to NZL 38 (Black Magic 2) and we want to see if the changes have improved her performance to the point that she has leapfrogged 32."

Nippon's John Cutler said his team would sail all of its scheduled races.

Meanwhile, acrimony grew in the defender trials. Dennis Conner's Stars and Stripes came back from near-catastrophe two days earlier to defeat America's Mighty Mary by 1:31 for the upper hand in the fight to determine which would follow PACT 95's Young America into the

finals. But the race was sailed under the shadow of protests. America3 claimed late Monday night that Stars and Stripes had replaced its keel illegally after Sunday's incident, when the dark blue boat sprang a leak around the keel and dropped out of its race against Young America.

The international jury was to hear the protests Tuesday night, but the hearing was pre-empted by a hastily called meeting of the Defence Committee, which gave Conner permission to replace his damaged keel.

Stars and Stripes Helmsman Paul Cayard said, "The Defence Committee has authority over what has transpired in the last 48 hours."

And if it isn't settled by then, OneAustralia is scheduled to race TAG Heur to end the round Saturday. Should they finish in a tie, oneAustralia would advance on the tiebreaker: a higher finish in the round-robins.

The picture is a little clearer among the defenders. With an old keel back on the boat and favourably light winds of 5 to 8 knots, Stars and Stripes (3-3) had less trouble than expected with Mighty Mary.

Conner's team had worked non-stop for 36 hours to repair its hull and replace the keel. He was fortunate on three counts: Sunday's accident happened in a race it was losing, anyway, and not against the team it had to

America's Cup

But it was believed that America3 was questioning that authority.

The victory by oneAustralia (5-3) was its second over TAG Heuer (3-5) in three days.

In sitting out the final set, Team New Zealand (8-0) virtually forfeits one win each to oneAustralia, TAG Heuer and Nippon (0-8), who must still sail the course to collect the wins. OneAustralia could advance by beating TNZ's unbeaten Black Magic 1 thus rendering the last three days meaningless, anyway.

Otherwise, presuming TAG Heuer beats Nippon Wednesday, all OneAustralia needs to do is to out sail the Japanese Friday.

beat, America3. It happened the day before a lay day, so there was an extra day to fix the boat without forfeiting a race; and the old keel, discarded earlier, may work better than the other one, if Tuesday's race was a reliable indicator.

The only possible downside, then, was what the jury might decide.

The boat and shore crews worked in a non-stop series of shifts with little sleep over two nights to repair the hull damage and have the boat ready to cast off at its usual time.

Navigator Jim Brady said, "There were two races today. The first was to get to the starting line."

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & TAMMAM HIRSHI

WEEKLY BRIDGE QUIZ

Q.1—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♠KQ 373 ♠873 ♣AJ102
The bidding has proceeded:
North East South West
1 ♣ Pass 2 ♣ Pass
3 ♣ Pass ?
What action do you take?
Q.2—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♠K10 786 ♣Q2 ♠AK8532
The bidding has proceeded:
North East South West
1 ♣ 1 ♣ 2 ♣ 4 ♣
What action do you take?
Q.3—Neither vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠AQ984 ♠K6 ♠72 ♠KJ64
The bidding has proceeded:
North East South West
1 ♣ 2 ♣ 3 ♣ Pass
What action do you take?
Q.4—Both vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠K10 78 ♠A98632 ♠J982
The bidding has proceeded:
North East South West
1 ♣ 1 ♣ 2 ♣ 4 ♣
What action do you take?
Q.5—Both vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠K72 ♠K4 ♠K83 ♠KJ65
The bidding has proceeded:
North East South West
1 ♣ 1 ♣ 2 ♣
What action do you take?
Q.6—Neither vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠K6 ♠AQ1098 ♠A82 ♠K83
What is your opening bid?

Visa of short duration for the SCHENGEN-countries Belgium - Netherlands - Luxemburg - France - Germany - Portugal - Spain

1. Effective 26th. March 1995, Jordanian nationals who apply for an entry visa to one of the above mentioned countries for a short stay (a period not exceeding ninety days), will obtain a visa, valid for the whole Schengen area. The total duration of a stay, or of several stays, is limited to three months per semester in the above mentioned Schengen area. (Italy and Greece will join the Schengen convention procedure later).

Belgium — Netherlands — Luxemburg
France
Germany
Spain — Portugal

Belgian Embassy: Tel: 675683
French Embassy: Tel: 641273
German Embassy: Tel: 689351
Spanish Embassy: Tel: 614166

2. The Schengen agreement signifies real progress with regard to the free circulation of persons. Of course, a foreigner with a valid residence permit, issued by one of the Schengen-countries, will be authorised to leave and to re-enter the Schengen area without having to apply for a new visa, on condition however that he possesses, besides the afore-mentioned residence permit, a valid national travel document (passport). Likewise, a foreigner in possession of a valid residence permit, issued by one of the Schengen-countries, together with a valid travel document, may stay for a maximum duration of three months per semester in all the other Schengen countries, without a prior visa request from these countries.

3. The visa application has to be addressed to the competent consular service in the following manner:

a. If the applicant wishes to travel to one country only, he will have to apply for the visa from the authorities of that specific country.
b. If the applicant intends to visit several countries, he has to apply to the authorities of the country of his main destination, mentioning the purpose of his visit.

c. If the main destination cannot be determined, the competent Schengen-country to issue the visa, will be the one first entered by the traveller.
4. The application for a visa does not automatically guarantee a favourable response. The purpose of the voyage cannot, in principle, be modified afterwards.

5. The documents required for obtaining a visa are the same as before. Further documents might be required in specific cases.

6. A visa for a long duration remains subject to the national regulations of the country of destination. Such a visa has to be applied for through the consular authorities of the concerned country. A visa required for the French Overseas Departments and Territories has to be applied for at the competent French consular representation.

7. A visa that has been issued by one of the Schengen-countries before the 26th. March 1995, remains valid until its expiry date, only within the country of its issuance.

April

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JOB VACANCY

A vacancy exists within an international construction firm operating from Amman, Jordan, for a

Contracts' Administrator

to work in construction management group.

The job applicant is expected to be a graduate of a law school with an approved degree having a minimum of two years experience with a law firm dealing in construction, engineering and professional services contracts.

Interested applicants may fax initially the resumes to Fax No.: 648954, Attention: V.P.- C.M.. Suitable candidates will be contacted to receive application forms in person for completion and submission to the prospective employee.

VACANCIES AVAILABLE

An international corporation project is seeking candidates (female, male), for a period of 18 months employment, to fill the following positions:

- Institutional Development Associate.
- Data Development Associate.
- Logistics Associate.

Candidates should meet the following Qualifications:

- 1- Jordanian nationality.
- 2- Minimum education level of a B.S. degree in agribusiness, or related areas. A post-graduate degree would be a plus.
- 3- Excellent capability to read, write and speak both the Arabic and English languages.
- 4- Demonstrated excellent planning and communication skills.
- 5- Strong knowledge of the use of office equipment including computers.
- 6- Vision for Jordan's future as a first rate exporter of fresh fruit and vegetables.
- 7- Must have a valid driver License.

All applicants should submit a one page statement, in English, addressing the potential future for Jordanian fresh produce exports.

Dead line for receiving applications is Thursday April 6th, 1995. please, mail your C.V. to:

The Administrator
P.O. Box 9145
Amman, Jordan
or fax to 689194

Cinema	Tel.: 634144	Cinema	Tel.: 699238	Cinema	Tel.: 677420	Tel.: 618274 - 618275	Tel.: 675571	Nabil & Hisham's Tel.: 625155
PHILADELPHIA		PLAZA		CONCORD		AMMOUN THEATRE	Nabil Al Mashini Theatre	AHLAN THEATRE
Tom Hanks in Forrest Gump Shows: 12:30, 3:15, 6:15, 9:15		Andy Garcia — Mee Ryan in When A Man Loves A Woman Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 5:30, 8:30, 10:30		Comedian star: Adel Imam — Bakht & Andadileh Shows: 12:30, 3:15, 6:00, 8:30, 11:00 CONCORD '2' Jean-Claude Van Dam STREET FIGHTER Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 5:45, 11:00		Musa Hijazin "Sum'a" in the political satire Hi Citizen written and directed by Mohammad Al Shawaqia daily on 8:30 p.m. The theatre closes on Monday — Haifa Al Agha in the children's play ☆☆ Sa'di's Return ☆☆	Presents Abu Awwad in the social comedy Punctured Bag The theatre is closed on Mondays Tickets are available all day	Presents: The political satire: AL SALAM YA SALAM at 8:30 p.m. For reservation, please call 625155 The theatre is closed Saturdays & Sunday

Workshop advances quest for regional tourism ties

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — A two-day work on regional cooperation in tourism concluded here Wednesday with key participants describing the outcome as a major success towards realising the goal of setting up a flexible mechanism that involves joint marketing, infrastructure development and training.

Addressing a joint press conference at the end of the meeting, which was attended by delegations from Arab states and Israel as well as 20 other non-regional representatives, Jordanian officials said the idea of such a mechanism was given further shape during the workshop.

Another key aspect of the meeting was that it advanced the formulation of ideas and projects that could be presented at the Amman economic summit to be held in October.

The summit is a follow-up to a conference held in Casablanca, Morocco, on economic development of the Middle East and North Africa, late last year.

It was at the Casablanca meeting that the proposal for a mechanism for regional cooperation in tourism was raised and accepted as a key element of the economic development of the region.

At the Amman summit, the private sector is expected to play a large role and submit concrete projects, both national and regional, and seek possible financing as well as technical support.

"We now know what we want," said Toshinori

Shiegeie, a senior official of the Japanese Foreign Ministry. While it is too early to discuss specifics such as financing and locations, the Amman meeting had advanced the quest for Arab-Israeli cooperation to attract foreign tourists and offer them proper facilities and services.

Ghassan Mifteh, under-secretary of the Ministry of Tourism, told the press conference that it was vital that the region's countries cooperate in developing tourism, particularly for "long-haul tourists who would like to visit the region as a whole rather than a single country."

Joint marketing is one of the key approaches in a regional strategy. Dr. Mifteh and Mr. Shiegeie said. This would involve the region's countries taking advantage of each others' expertise and facilities for the benefit for all.

Another idea is to set up a regional centre for "developing tourism-related human resources." This would involve the establishment of a regional training school or a network of schools to train personnel in handling various aspects of tourism services, including marketing.

Dr. Mifteh noted that the state-owned Amman Hotel Training College was being privatised and this facility could serve "either as the (proposed) regional training centre or one of the network of schools."

The two-day meeting in Amman was the third workshop on regional cooperation in tourism, stemming from the multilateral phase of the Middle East peace process.

Delegates included European as well as North American representatives.

The first workshop was held in Bonn in January and the second in Cairo in mid-March.

The next meeting will be held in Eilat, to be followed by a conference in Cairo in June and another in Amman in July.

A statement issued after the conclusion of the Amman meeting on Wednesday said: "There is a political decision already made in Casablanca to establish 'a regional tourism board,' and for all parties to work towards that end will solidify the Middle East peace process."

"The regional mechanism should be a flexible structure with a strong participation of the private and public sectors in addition to governments; 'It is essential that the regional mechanism should have meaningful, effective activities, such as joint marketing and promotion, in order to attract the private sector participation; 'There mechanism should be an umbrella organization within which sub-regional divisions are formed and such sub-regional divisions could have one large joint annual meeting, where all members participate, and 'There should be some sort of involvement of extra-regional members, in particular from the private sector, of North America, West and East Europe, and Pacific areas."

New Petra region

The council of ministers on Tuesday decided to set up a

(Continued on page 7)

Americans held in Iraq insist they were arrested in U.N. zone — CNN

WASHINGTON (Agencies) — Two Americans sentenced to eight years in an Iraqi jail appear to be haggard but in good health and insist they were in U.N.-marked territory when they were arrested, Cable News Network (CNN) reported Wednesday.

CNN was permitted to visit the two Americans, David Daliberti, 41, and William Barlow, 39, for a couple of hours in a small room in a prison in Baghdad.

The two men were arrested March 13 and sentenced Saturday to eight years in prison for entering Iraq without permission. CNN correspondent Brent Sadler visited them in the company of Polish diplomats representing U.S. interests in Iraq, which has no diplomatic ties with the United States.

"They seemed downcast, hollow-eyed, tired and in a complete state of uncertainty" about what was going to happen to them, Mr. Sadler said from the Iraqi capital.

Mr. Daliberti, however, said he had suffered a heart seizure in Baghdad a few days ago and Mr. Barlow tried to notify prison guards for a couple hours before his

colleague was treated. Mr. Sadler said the two men felt they were "prisoners of revenge" and that they had been "committed to eight years in jail for simple making a wrong turn."

They were "begging the outside world to do something about their case," he said.

Mr. Sadler said the men had been given Iraqi dinars for money to buy food by the Polish diplomat and that Mr. Barlow also was given eyeglasses.

On Tuesday, Iraqi ambassador to the United Nations Nizar Hamdoun said the two men could appeal their sentences to a higher court.

Mr. Hamdoun said the sentences were not related to Iraq's push for an easing of the economic sanctions imposed following its 1990 invasion of Kuwait or "to any other issue."

U.S. officials have dismissed as preposterous suggestions by Iraqi officials that the two Americans may have been "spies or saboteurs."

"Both men were absolutely adamant... that they believe they were arrested on U.N.-signposted territory on the Iraqi side of the demilitarised

zone" between Iraq and Kuwait, Mr. Sadler said.

"They cannot understand why they were arrested by Iraqis on a base that had U.N. markings," Mr. Sadler said.

"They feel they have been sentenced to eight years in jail simply for making a wrong turn in the road," said Mr. Sadler.

The State Department had no immediate comment.

Mr. Sadler reported that they had been submitted to "intense military interrogation... including lengthy periods when they were blindfolded," immediately after their arrest which they described as "terrifying."

Also Tuesday, the U.S. Senate approved a non-binding resolution condemning Iraq's imprisonment of two and urged President Bill Clinton to "take all appropriate action to assure their prompt release."

Sen. Tom Harkin, who offered the Senate resolution, said the two men worked for private contractors in Kuwait.

"The sense of the Senate" resolution is non-binding and serves only to relay the lawmakers' strong views to the president.

Israel bemoans loss of satellite

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — The loss of a \$3.5 million Israeli satellite launched by a Russian rocket was termed a "massive failure" on Wednesday by the project leader.

The Israeli equipment as well as a Russian and a Mexican satellite were lost after launch from the Plesetsk military space base above the Arctic circle on Tuesday.

"It's massive failure, after years of work," said Giora Shaviv of Haifa's Technion university.

"If it turns out that the launch rocket exploded before putting TechSat in orbit we will seek financial compensation from the Russians," he added.

A Russian newspaper reported that the Start booster rocket caught fire and was destroyed together with its load. It was part of an ambitious Russian project to convert SS-25 nuclear missiles into satellite launchers.

American-Jewish philanthropist Joseph Gurwin underwrote the cost of the satellite which bore his name and was intended for meteorological research.

"If the details in our hands are correct, it is a colossal Russian failure," said Yigal Flor, head of ground control at the Technion institute which built the Gurwin-1 satellite.

into orbit on Tuesday on a SS-25 rocket.

The Launch in Plesetsk, 900 kilometres north of Moscow, was seen as a sign of growing cooperation between once hostile countries.

Israel's ambassador to Moscow, Aliza Shenhar, said it was "more than symbolic testimony to the changes in Russia" that Moscow was converting missiles originally built to carry nuclear warheads for civilian use.

But nearly 24 hours after the launch, ground control in Israel was unable to make contact, said Giora Shaviv, head of the space centre at the Technion.

Israel Radio, quoting Russian officials, reported Wednesday that the rocket and satellite apparently fell into the sea somewhere in the Far East about 10 minutes after Tuesday's launch.

Mr. Shaviv said this conflicted with information he had from Russian officials that signals detected from the rocket indicated that both the satellite and rocket were orbiting about 670 kilometres above earth.

was programmed to start up 20 minutes after detachment from the Russian rocket.

"Right now, it's a big piece of metal going around the earth," said Yossi Shartel, one of the satellite project managers in Israel.

The reason for the failed detachment was apparently a malfunction in a holding screw, Mr. Shaviv said. He said that the screw was supposed to explode and trigger a coil that pushes the satellites up and out of the rocket canister.

The 48-kilogramme Gurwin-1 was built at the Technion by students, new immigrants and industry experts who donated time and hardware.

The Gurwin-1 was designed to serve as a test platform for 12 Israeli high-tech firms, including a space-based computer network, a horizon sensor that determines the satellite's position and a momentum wheel that helps it lock into orbit.

Israel has used its own boosters to launch two satellites, Ofek-1 and Ofek-2, in 1988 and 1990. Israel Radio has said Ofek-3 would be sent into orbit soon. All three are believed to be stages in Israel's development of a spy satellite.

The Gurwin-1 could not be launched from Israel because



ALGERIAN FUNERAL: A bystander faints in front of the offices of the Algerian government daily Moudjahid before the funeral of its assassinated editor-in-chief Mohammed

Abdul Rahmani in Algiers. Abdul Rahmani, 57, was gunned down by Islamic extremists as he sat in his car in a traffic jam (AFP photo)

NEWS IN BRIEF

Dutch offer support for Arafat

GAZA CITY (AFP) — Dutch Foreign Minister Hans van Mierlo pledged full support for the self-rule Palestinian Authority when he met Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat on Wednesday. "Where we can help the Palestinian people, we want to do it," Mr. Van Mierlo told a press conference after talks with Mr. Arafat. The minister said the Hague would back the construction of a port in Gaza and renewed European Union commitments to help the Palestinians hold long-delayed elections to an autonomy council. Mr. Arafat called for quick elections, which were originally scheduled for last July. He also complained about Israel's repeated closures of the Gaza Strip and West Bank after attacks by Palestinian extremists. "This is a real tragedy," Mr. Arafat said counting 168 days of closure since autonomy began last May. He said each day of closure meant losses of \$4 million, or more than all the money pledged by foreign donors over the last 10 months. Mr. Van Mierlo accompanied Queen Beatrix on a visit to Israel this week.

Peres wants to build a Gaza-West Bank bridge

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres has proposed a 45-kilometre road bridge between the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, a senior police officer said Wednesday. The scheme would enable Palestinians to travel between the two areas without entering the Jewish state and thereby improve security. Mr. Peres put the idea to an army and police committee this week, said the officer who attended the meeting. "The project should be put to the government in the coming days," he told AFP. "Peres told us he had already spoken to Yasser Arafat who was interested." Mr. Peres admitted the project would run into financial trouble, but insisted that Israel should try to find foreign investors. "It's one of Peres' fantasies," scoffed a finance minister official. "Let him find the money if he wants to do it, but Israel will not be able to pay."

19 Palestinian policemen arrested

JERICHO (AFP) — Palestinian authorities kept 19 policemen in detention in the self-rule enclave of Jericho on Wednesday after a brawl between rival security forces, a senior officer said. Ten men from preventive security and nine from Yasser Arafat's presidential guard were hauled in on Monday after fist-fights on a Jericho street. Shots were also fired in the air and one policeman ended up in hospital. Trouble erupted when the guards tried to stop preventive security men from crossing a checkpoint outside a house where Arafat stayed in the town last weekend. "This was the work of irresponsible people, there is no conflict between the two police services," said the officer who refused to be named.

Yemenis in Aden protest higher fares

ADEN (R) — Police fired shots in the air to disperse demonstrators who burned tyres and set up roadblocks in Aden on Wednesday to protest over a doubling of public transport fares after the government raised petrol prices, witnesses said. They said hundreds of college and high school students took part in the protests early on Wednesday. Shopkeepers pulled down their shutters in the former capital of southern Yemen to protect premises from rioting, but witnesses said the demonstrations subsided by midday. Small oil producer Yemen announced some time ago it would raise subsidised domestic energy prices as part of a reform programme for its ailing economy. It doubled the prices of benzene, cooking gas and fuel oil from midnight on Tuesday, an official Oil Ministry statement said. The announcement set the price of benzene at 12 rials per litre (0.2 gallons) (about 10 U.S. cents), up from six rials.

Maronite bishop: Pope to visit Lebanon

BEIRUT (AP) — Pope John Paul II will visit Lebanon in 1996, two years after he put off a planned trip due to security conditions, a Maronite Catholic bishop said Wednesday. Bishop Bishara Rai, who just returned from the Vatican, told reporters he relayed the Pope's decision to Cardinal Nasrallah Sfeir, patriarch of the one-million-strong Maronite church in Lebanon. Bishop Rai is Patriarch Sfeir's deputy in the 15-century old church. Pope John Paul II had planned to visit Lebanon last spring in a gesture of support after the country's 1975-90 civil war. But the pontiff delayed the trip amid bombing scares and a government crackdown on right-wing Christians in the country.

36 bodies found after Turkish mine blast

ANKARA (AFP) — Rescue workers have retrieved 36 bodies from a coalmine in Turkey where an explosion brought down a gallery three days ago, reliable sources said Wednesday. The body of another miner is still buried under the rubble down the mine in Sogun region about 200 kilometres east of Ankara, the source said. The explosion Sunday left nine other miners injured among about 50 who were working in the gallery at the time.

Somali armed gangs clash; one killed

MOGADISHU (R) — At least one person was killed and two others were injured when gangs of armed Somalis skirmished over control of Mogadishu's airport. Witnesses said the clash erupted when a group of armed men waving a Somali national flag arrived at the airport, they were army veterans and had authority to control the facility. Militias loyal to Habre Gedir clan faction leader Mohamed Farah Aided responded by opening up with heavy machine guns.

Price hikes lead to clashes in Yemen; three shot dead

ADEN (Agencies) — Yemeni police shot dead at least three people and wounded several others in clashes in the southern port city of Aden on Wednesday sparked by anger over a petrol price hike, witnesses said.

Police fired on the demonstrators and surrounded the hospital where casualties were being treated, the witnesses said. The clashes later subsided.

Petrol prices doubled on Wednesday in a hike which took place without any prior announcement.

Witnesses also reported demonstrations in Ta'izz and Dhahran in the north. A Yemeni journalist said several petrol stations had been set ablaze in demonstrations in Ta'izz.

In Sanaa there were no reports of any demonstrations. But public transport was not running and there were long queues at petrol stations, residents said.

A government statement broadcast on state radio said subsidies would be scrapped for basic foodstuffs including wheat and flour.

But the salaries of state employees would increase by between 20 and 50 per cent and soldiers and policemen would also receive a raise the government said.

As part of reforms to stimulate the economy, the government decided to allocate a package of 24 billion riyals (\$2 billion at the official rate) to development projects

in 1995.

Eight billion would be financed by borrowing abroad, the statement said.

Job creation projects would be launched costing 500 million riyals (\$41.6 million) and another 500 million riyals would be spent on rural development.

The salaries of state employees, who are regarded as the poorest sector of the Yemeni population, were increased by 40 per cent in 1992.

In a bid to keep the lid on inflation the government raised prices of basic foodstuffs in February by 40 per cent in state shops and adopted draconian measures against speculators.

Some 500 wholesalers have been arrested for fraud and several of them jailed.

Yemen has an external debt running into more than seven billion and suffered losses of \$11 billion during the civil war which raged from May to July 1994.

Before the hikes, a liter of gasoline was selling for 50 U.S. cents (about \$2 a gallon), based on the official rate of 12 riyals to the dollar. But inflation has sent the black market value of the dollar soaring ten-fold to 120 riyals.

The current budget deficit is estimated at 62 billion riyals (\$5 billion), equivalent to half the state's annual revenue, according to figures published in Aden.

Court kills ban on famous Egyptian film

CAIRO (Agencies) — A court Wednesday overruled a verdict banning an acclaimed director Youssef Shabin's film "The Emigrant" which was accused of being an affront to Islam.

The decision was seen as a victory for Egyptian artists and intellectuals who have complained the government was acquiescing in Muslim fundamentalists' efforts to censor works of art on the basis of religion.

Mr. Shabin stood up and raised his arms in triumph, and the courtroom broke up in wild applause after Judge Seifallah Mohammad Kassiba read the ruling. Fans and supporters crowded Mr. Shabin to congratulate him.

"There are many problems in Egypt, but it still has some brains," Mr. Shabin told reporters.

Judge Kassiba told the Associated Press that the lawyer who filed the case, Mahmoud Abu Al Faid, could not appeal to another court. Mr. Abu Al Faid did not speak to reporters.

On Dec. 29, a lower court banned the film, saying it depicted the biblical Prophet Joseph in violation of Islamic law. Mr. Shabin denied that the film's main character Ram was meant to be Joseph.

But Mr. Kassiba did not deal with Joseph, instead overruling the verdict on the basis that the lawyer did not have the legal right to go to court with the case.

"The ability of a person to go to court after seeing something against Islam and trying to correct it is in the Sharia, but it is not part of the Egyptian law," Mr. Kassiba told the AP. "On those grounds I overruled the

COLUMN

Italian court orders ban on smoking in public places

ROME (AP) — An administrative court has ruled public places, ranging from restaurants to post offices, must ban smoking from now on. Italy's health minister has 30 days to decide whether to convert the ruling, issued Monday by the Lazio Regional Tribunal, into law. The ruling, however, rejected a bid by consumer advocates to extend the ban to all workplaces, saying those open to the public would have to prohibit smoking. Public establishments which include night clubs, bars, can ask to be exempt from the ban if they install conditioning systems just strong enough to keep fresh.

A German Mount Rushmore? The plan's on a rocky path

DRESDEN, Germany (AP) — A German Mount Rushmore, with a gargantuan stone head carved in stone? It's a building contractor's idea of giving thanks to the giants of German unification. But it seems to be ahead of time. Likenesses of Konrad Adenauer and Willy Brandt also would be chiseled in the sandstone mountains in an east German national park along the Czech border under contractor Reinhold Schneider's plan. Adenauer was West Germany's first chancellor. Brandt developed détente policies that brought the two Germanys close together. Kohl steered Germany to reunification in 1990. "Rock of unity" is what Schneider calls the giant stone carving. But local authorities say Schneider's plan is unacceptable. It would be the park, called Saxony-Switzerland because of dramatic peaks that rise from the Elbe River, offend the Czechs, the officials said Tuesday. The giant stone heads would be across the border to Bohemia, a region of the Czech Republic occupied by the Germans.

Embarrassed owner can't unload profane parrot

LONDON (AFP) — When Mark Hooper purchased Charlie four years ago, the African grey parrot was an impressive young bird that could whistle, but almost nothing. As the 3-year-old car dealer invited drinking buddies over, Charlie listened and learned a quiring a foul vocabulary dealing almost exclusively with bodily functions and sexual acts. Growing embarrassed by Charlie's not-so-profane but usable to him off, Hooper has put the parrot up for sale, hoping to recover some of the £1,200 he paid for him. But he's had about 150 viewings and no takers. "They think he would be bad influence on the kids," he said.

Thirst-busting drink packs punch

PRAGUE (R) — Coughing to quench a powerful thirst can now pick up a shot of Semtex, the drink of the plastic explosive. Officials at the Czech beverage company Finelli Sro said they have begun marketing a caffeine energy drink with the same name as the plastic explosive. A Finelli spokesman told Reuters the Czech makers of the explosive, Synthesia A.S., trademark rights for Semtex only as an explosive. The plans mostly domestic use of the yellowish drink, has sent shipments to Ukraine and Russia.

The grim truth about China's toilets

BEIJING (R) — Tap water flows to more than 40 per cent of China's 900 million peasants but fewer than 10 have clean water, according to China's health minister, Ma Xiangpu, quoted by the official Xinhua News Agency on Tuesday.